

Regent sends cable to Sheikh Zayed

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday sent a cable wishes (UAE). Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan, on the occasion of the 32nd anniversary of the assumption of his constitutional powers. The Regent wished Sheikh Zayed continued good health and happiness and the people of the UAE further progress and prosperity under his leadership.

Jordan Times

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جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي.

One civilian killed in south Lebanon shelling

TYRE (R) — One Lebanese civilian was killed and another wounded on Wednesday in shelling in south Lebanon, a security source said. He said the unidentified civilian was killed in his car on a highway linking two villages 25 km south east of Tyre. The wounded man was a passenger in the same car. He said the highway came under shelling from an area under the control of the pro-Israel South Lebanon Army (SLA). The source gave no further details. The latest shelling brings to 16 the number of civilians killed in south Lebanon since the start of 1998. It also brings the number of wounded to 40.

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Iraq freezes cooperation with UNSCOM inspectors

BAGHDAD (AP) — President Saddam Hussein Wednesday froze cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors in protest against eight years of economic sanctions.

He also demanded that a new body of weapons inspectors — based either in Geneva or Vienna — be created under the supervision of a monitoring group, representing the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.

A government statement said President Hussein has decided to "completely suspend cooperation" with the U.N. Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

It said U.N. monitoring activities will, however, be allowed on the condition that U.N. "personnel carry out the monitoring strictly respecting Iraq's sovereignty, security and its people's dignity."

This means that U.N. experts can no longer search suspected weapons site in

Iraq or gain access to documents. However, monitoring cameras and sensors installed in suspected weapons sites will remain in place.

The United Nations Special Commission, or UNSCOM, has been searching, monitoring and accounting for Iraq's chemical and biological arms, nuclear programme and long range missiles since 1991 in a bid to eliminate these

weapons of mass destruction.

The sanctions were imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, and have crippled the economy by banning the free sale of oil, the country's economic lifeblood.

The government statement, read out on national television, said President Hussein reached the decision after chairing a meeting of the Revolutionary Command

Council, Iraq's most powerful decision-making body, and members of the ruling Baath Party.

It said President Hussein laid down several conditions for restoring cooperation:

—The U.N. Security Council must re-establish UNSCOM.

—A new executive bureau should be formed to direct the activities of the Special Commission and its staff.

—The new bureau should include an equal number of members representing permanent members of the Security Council: United States, Russia, France, China and Britain. Its chairmanship should be held in rotation.

—Iraq should be present in the new bureau as an observer.

—The new Special Commission should move its headquarters from the U.N. in New York to U.N. premises either in Geneva or Vienna.

(Continued on page 7)

White House: Iraq's decision is 'rhetoric'

WASHINGTON (APF) — The White House on Wednesday called Iraq's decision to suspend cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors "political rhetoric" that Washington and its allies have seen before.

"What we've heard today is political rhetoric," spokesman P.J. Crowley told a news briefing. "Let's wait and see once we hear the full report" from the top U.N. weapons inspector, Richard Butler. "We've seen this kind of posturing before."

Iraq has obstructed inspectors charged with accounting for its weapons of mass destruction since the end of the Gulf war before, Mr. Crowley said.

Mayor: People should abide by official street names

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman Mayor Mandouh Abbadi has requested that the public abide by official names of streets and districts within the Amman area as provided by the Greater Amman Municipality.

In a letter he sent to the Department of Press and Publications, Dr. Abbadi said he was making the request based on an amendment to regulations No. 55 of 1965 concerning the naming and numbering of streets and buildings of the city of Amman and in accordance with Article 41 of the municipality's law of 1955.

He said the regulations provided in that law read as follows:

"All writers of official letters, publishers of newspapers, periodicals and other printed material, as well as publishing houses and cartographers and others involved in the production of topographic, geographic or tourist publications and various employees and citizens should use the names as officially provided by Amman Municipality."

Arafat announces cabinet with no major changes

RAMALLAH (R) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat announced a long-awaited cabinet reshuffle on Wednesday but named ministers by keeping ministers they had wanted sacked for alleged corruption and mismanagement.

"The old ministries will remain the same," Mr. Arafat said before naming 10 additional ministers to an expanded cabinet amid calls from members of the 88-seat Legislative Council.

Mr. Arafat accepted the resignation of his 18-seat cabinet in June, when lawmakers agreed to hold off a no-confidence vote to give him more time to appoint a new team after several months of pressure for change.

Only one of the outgoing members, Education Minister Yasser Amr, was sacked. One changed jobs, three left their ministries but stayed in the cabinet as ministers of state without portfolio and the rest kept their previous posts.

No date was set for a council vote on the reshuffle, but legislators predicted endorsement.

Misgivings about the reshuffle extended to within the cabinet.

Hanan Ashrawi, whose portfolio switched to tourism from higher education, said internal

changes had been minimal.

"I believe when people called for change they didn't ask for additions. They asked for change in the status quo, but what we see now is maintaining what existed (and) adding people to it," Ms. Ashrawi told Reuters.

Abdul Jawad Saleh, who had been agriculture minister and had wanted to leave the cabinet, shouted out in protest when Mr. Arafat named him as a minister of state.

"I'm convinced that there's no cabinet and corruption became an institution in the Palestinian system," he said.

He called the appointment of 10 more ministers from the legislature "an attempt to buy the Legislative Council."

Lawmakers, elected in 1996 under peace accords with Israel that established the self-rule Palestinian National Authority, have been pressing for change since 1997 when an official auditor's report and scathing parliamentary probe alleged that corruption, mismanagement and waste were rampant.

They have also shown impatience with foot dragging by Mr. Arafat on budgetary reforms and the enactment of council resolutions left unsigned or unimplemented.

merged by the executive branch.

He has delayed approval of major legislation including a draft constitution or basic law which would limit the powers of the self-rule authority, which covers parts of the West Bank and Gaza.

"I think we failed the test of observing the principles of accountability and transparency," independent lawmaker Ziad Abu Amr said after Mr. Arafat's speech on the new cabinet.

He said the cabinet was nonetheless likely to win a vote of endorsement from the council, not least because so many lawmakers had posts as ministers.

The changes announced by Mr. Arafat include provisions for new ministries to cover areas such as parliamentary affairs, the environment and Palestinians held prisoner in Israeli jails.

One of the new cabinet members, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Nabil Amr, defended the expanded executive as a reflection of Mr. Arafat's desire to satisfy various interests.

"Considerations include regions, religion, political loyalty, competence and Legislative Council membership," he said.

Prince Hassan emphasises need for close cooperation between education, production sectors

ZARQA (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Wednesday emphasised the need for greater interaction and coordination between educational institutions on the one hand and the production sector on the other, saying the two sides should have a common language and build confidence among themselves in the process of restructuring higher education.

"Jordanian skills and talents do exist in this country but the question is how to employ them in order to release their potential by conducting open dialogue towards consensus on unified policies," said Prince Hassan who was addressing a meeting at the Hashimiyeh University in Zarqa, grouping academics and representatives of the industrial sector and firms which have acquired the ISO certificate.

"The industries and institutions represented in this meeting have realised the need to improve their competitiveness in the age of globalisation and have made new achievements by acquiring the ISO certificate," said Prince Hassan at a meeting attended by Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan, Minister of Industry and Trade Hani Mulki and presidents of Jordanian universities.

"This Jordanian achievement is a source of pride which we encourage because we need to focus our attention on the quality of the products so that they can conform to international specifications and standards and achieve higher levels of competitiveness," said Prince Hassan.

Prince Hassan noted in the meeting, convened to discuss the role of scientific research and its relation to development, that Jordanian institutions which have acquired the ISO certificate are 110 of which 84 are industrial firms and 26 are services and consultancy related.

He said: "This achievement increases our optimism and confidence in the future of our industry as we realise the steps which have to be taken to achieve higher productivity and development."

The Regent noted that the number of Jordanian institutions which have won ISO certificates is relatively the highest in the Arab World and the industrial sector has acquired 76 per cent of the total number of firms that have won the ISO certificate.

Calling for intensifying cooperation between the universities



Students and residents of the city of Zarqa receive His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan as he arrives at the Hashimiyeh University on Wednesday (Photo by Boghos)

and production sectors, Prince Hassan said: "Our meeting here brings together companies and distinguished industries as well as our universities which have made vast strides in education and training levels. This distinguished achievement is bound to increase through further cooperation which will result in adapting education and scientific research to market needs, with very beneficial results for our society and our development process."

Prince Hassan referred to one of the research papers reviewed by the participants to the meeting, saying that it underlines the linkage between scientific research and higher studies on the one hand and the requirements of development and the increase in productivity on the other.

He pointed to the present weakness in the linkage between the two sides as reflecting negatively on the level of research in connection with productivity requirements.

Prince Hassan stressed the need for linking the policy on science and technology with the industrial policies as well as the policy on development in human resources.

To achieve this, he said, universities should build bridges with the different institutions of production, economic and social sectors and should explore the needs so that scientific research can be of service to market's needs.

The Regent also calls for new concepts of reforms from the base to the top.

Laying emphasis on accountability and transparency as means for combating corruption, Prince Hassan said: "The time has come for us to express our desire in minimising negligence in dispensing with public funds before talking about corruption to an impractical and unrealistic manner."

Prince Hassan noted that some universities which cannot shoulder the burden of establishing infrastructure for scientific research can continue to contribute to the development process through cooperation with trade unions.

He referred to international agreements which Jordan has signed or is planning to sign like the association agreement with the European Union and membership to the World Trade Organisation, noting that these agreements carry great potential in supporting Jordan's scientific research and in helping to promote production inputs.

Prince Hassan referred to the Scientific Week which will be held next month, saying that the event will offer the institutions an opportunity to identify the obstacles in the development of industry by studying the experiments of other nations like Japan. These institutions might arrive at practical recommendations to develop the industrial sector.

Referring to the recent honours by His Majesty King Hussein of pioneers in industry, Prince Hassan said there is need to support the new generation of businessmen and industrialists.

"We have to admit that we have a new generation of creative people capable of introducing change and are therefore worthy of support and appreciation," stressed Prince Hassan.

Underlining the participation of universities and production sectors in the dialogue, he said such event is extremely important, expressing hope that the dialogue will continue in the best interest of Jordan.

Prince Hassan invited all institutions of the civic society to benefit from the open dialogue which will be held this month to deal with priorities in public spending, noting that and new mechanisms, pointing out that all the concerned parties including the government, Parliament, local institutions and different organisations will be taking part.

Addressing the participants, Prince Hassan said: "Stretch out your hands with one another for cooperation because we have the will and capital for making the required change and for safeguarding our achievements to reach international levels. The time has come for us to prove Jordan's ability to compete with others."

The Regent attended part of the three meetings which grouped participants who had taken part in the seminars that tackled scientific research in Jordanian state universities. Prince Hassan later inspected the universities, different sections, visiting the laboratories and other utilities and talking to students.

Despite good intentions, observers say government failed its mandate

By Ghadeer Taber
Special to Jordan Times

AMMAN — Pressure mounted this week for the resignation of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali's government as its own current "Watergate" scandal weighs heavily on a Cabinet already saddled with a string of failures.

From its handling of the 1997 elections which left the Islamic Action Front, the mainstream opposition party, out of the political process, through to the current water-pollution crisis, Dr. Majali's government has received a severe beating in public opinion.

The deepening economic crisis, the faltering peace process and the "anti-democratic" press law have combined with the charges of administrative nepotism and corruption to expand the scope of resentment and frustration among people.

His Majesty King Hussein

appointed Dr. Majali in March 1997 to oversee the country's fourth Parliamentary elections. The ballot was marred by the boycott of the influential IAF and 12 political parties, a move that helped produce a largely pliant parliament and increased tension with the opposition.

When the King assigned the 72-year-old premier the job for the second term in five years, he asked him to give top priority to the domestic ills of the country — poverty, unemployment and a bloated bureaucracy.

He asked him to continue economic reforms and proceed with the politically-sensitive privatisation programme delayed for years.

In addition to a host of problems, Dr. Majali inherited from his predecessors, politicians and pundits acknowledge that regional instability resulting from continued deadlock in the peace process and the United Nations embargo on Iraq

have greatly harmed the economy, whose health has long been affected by regional developments.

Still, they fault the present government for failing to effectively deal with most of these challenges and problems.

"The Majali government came in with the task of bolding elections, continuing economic reforms including privatisation and related laws, improving relations with the Arab states and balancing relations with Israel," said one official. "But the government failed to achieve its mandate on almost all fronts," he conceded.

The latest two crises — the discrepancy in the government's economic growth rates in June that reflected a fall in average living standards and the July 10 water pollution crisis — has sparked a chorus of calls for the resignation of the government from politicians from both sides of the political

spectrum, columnists and ordinary Jordanians.

"Criticism is not only coming from the elite, but across the board because it is clear this government has not made any tangible improvements in the lives of ordinary people," said Mustafa Hamameh, director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan.

"There have been too many crises, whether of their own making or not, and the government has not been able to effectively deal with the problems," he told the Jordan Times.

"There is a perception that no one is running the government and every time there is a crisis, King Hussein or Crown Prince Hassan has to interfere and this is not healthy."

This week, criticism of the government peaked in the press with attacks on the Cabinet for mismanagement of the ongoing water crisis. The press went so far as to

urge citizens to initiate legal action against possible official negligence.

Professional and women's associations yesterday took their own swipes at the government, urging Parliament to hold it accountable for its actions.

The water ministry remains vague on the source of the foul-smelling and murky domestic water supplies that created a nation wide scare.

The water situation only added to the tension that has been building for months.

Frustration over the state of the "depressed" economy and the government's dealings with Israel despite deadlocked peace talks and growing popular anti-Israeli sentiments doubtless played a part in increasing calls for a government change.

With the economy growing so slowly — 0.8 % in 1996 instead of the estimated 5.2 % and 2.7 % instead of 5 % in 1997 — and the budget deficit on the rise, the gov-

ernment has its hands tied, economists and analysts say.

They say extra speeding may undo years of difficult economic reform. The United Nations — imposed embargo on Iraq shows no sign of ending; and Israel appears unwilling to facilitate greater access for Jordan to lucrative markets in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

But the economists say the government has the power to do more. The lack of movement on administrative reform has only scared away private investment.

"This government came to power with bold ideas, but it lacked bold action," said an independent politician. "At the end of the day, a government is judged by its achievements and not its intentions."

And according to officials, economists, and politicians who spoke to the Jordan Times, the government's achievements are limited and the country's woes cannot all be blamed on outside forces.

By sending mixed signals to potential investors, diplomats and bankers say the government is making a "mess" of its controversial privatisation scheme — one of the last big items in the reform programme.

Parliament has endorsed important economic liberalisation laws dealing with electricity, customs and industries, but it has to approve other vital legislation such as the patent law and a partnership association with the European Union.

Several economists say they are waiting to see how the dust, stirred by contradictory statements made over the planned sale of 40% of the telecommunications company to a strategic partner, will settle.

The government on Wednesday indicated it would go ahead with the sale of JTC despite suggestions by the company's chairman of the board not to do so.

"The JTC sale has been

marred by the government's waffling," said one economist. "This has affected our credibility and investor image."

On the foreign policy front, relations with Arab countries have not changed a great deal since the tenure of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti. Even with Iraq and Syria, with which Mr. Kabariti had an acrimonious relationship, Amman's ties with Baghdad and Damascus remain the same.

Looking at political freedoms, the government has taken a beating from the local press and international groups over a restrictive draft press law, now being debated in the House.

International human rights groups have been vocal about what they see as a deterioration in democratic reforms launched after price riots 10 years ago.

(Continued on page 7)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq and Iran have recently held a series of talks to improve ties. Nearly 6,000 prisoners of war from both countries were freed and repatriated in April in the biggest PoW swap since 1990.

Iranian pilgrims will stay two days in Najaf, two days in Karbala and one day in Kazemein, the governor

Iraq has been preparing for the resumption of visits by building new roads and hotels in the Munthriya checkpoint between the two countries.

British Airways plans direct Tehran flights

TEHRAN (R) — British Airways said on Wednesday it would start direct flights between London Heathrow and Tehran on Sunday. "British Airways recognises the growing importance of Iran as a business and holiday destination," Bob Chaplin, the airline's manager in Iran, said in a statement. The three weekly Tehran-bound services, to be operated by Boeing 777 aircraft, will replace flights to Iran by the British carrier which currently stop over in Baku, Azerbaijan, for a crew change. The move to direct flights follows upgrading of fire, security and other facilities in Tehran's Azadi hotel, where crew members will stay while in the Iranian capital. The British flag-carrier will be the first international airline in recent years to change their whole crew in Tehran. Several European airlines currently operate flights from Tehran.

Police investigate bishop in case of missing \$1.5 million

NICOSIA (AP) — Police are investigating a bishop of the Cyprus Orthodox Church in connection with an alleged scam involving \$1.5 million, the attorney-general said Wednesday. Attorney-General Alecos Markides said the probe had been prompted by a complaint from three Portuguese businessmen who said they had transferred the money to Bishop Chrysanthos of Limassol for investment in bonds and shares. The money had apparently disappeared. The bishop has already been mentioned in connection with a fraud case involving foreign exchange worth \$3.7 million which is being investigated by Scotland Yard, the London police's detective department, and Cypriot police. On Tuesday the Holy Synod of the Cyprus Orthodox Church announced that it would also investigate the bishop's various business deals. The synod, the church's supreme body, criticised the bishop for getting involved in financial commitments and business deals without its approval.

Blackout strikes 900 travellers at Cairo airport

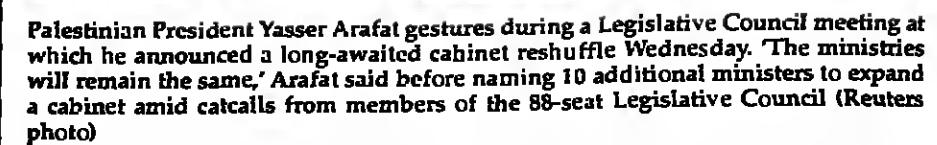
CAIRO (AFP)—A power cut struck Cairo international airport early Wednesday grounding 900 travellers and prompting security officials to seal doors to the arrivals hall. The lights went out as travellers from Khartoum, Madrid, London, Sanaa and Tunis packed the arrivals hall, the spokesman said. Airport officials said the main power cable feeding the airport broke down and that generators which normally go on automatically failed to operate.

Egypt tourist influx in May down by 241,000

CAIRO (R)—The number of tourists visiting Egypt in May was 241,000, compared to 331,000 who came to the country in May, 1997, central bank figures showed on Wednesday. The tourist influx also fell compared to April this year when the number was 297,000, the figures showed. It was the first time since January that the number of tourists has fallen. Tourism dropped off after the November, 1997 attack by Islamists in Luxor in which 58 foreign tourists were killed but then the number of visitors started to rise. Revenues from the sector are an important source of foreign income for Egypt.

Floods in Iran leave 41 people dead and 33 missing

TEHRAN (AP)—Flash floods have killed at least 41 people in Iran this week, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported Wednesday. Another 33 people are missing. Following heavy rains, the floods washed through the town of Masouleh in the northern province of Gilan, destroying bridges and houses and killing livestock. Twenty-nine people drowned, 30 went missing and 18 were injured, the agency said. In the north-western province of Ardebil province, five people drowned and three disappeared in floods that devastated farms, homes and roads. Four people were killed and four injured in West Azerbaijan province, while in East Azerbaijan one person drowned in the floods, the agency said. The floods also hit 19 villages in the northern province of Mazandaran, damaging 120 houses, schools and clinics. Two people drowned in the western province of Hamadan. The agency reported that rescue operations were under way in the stricken areas.



CAIRO (AFP) — Anti-Israeli Egyptian lawyers have filed a lawsuit against Social Affairs Minister Mervat Al Tellawi for allowing the creation of a pro-peace group, court officials said on Wednesday.

A Cairo emergency court said it will convene on September 7 to examine the lawsuit filed on Monday which also calls for the dissolution of the Cairo Peace Society, the official said.

The lawyers, known for their anti-Israeli stance, argue that the creation of the peace group violates a 1964 law which bans the foundation of non-governmental organisations that deal with politics.

"This organisation calls for normalisation with the enemy Israel, an issue which threatens social stability and could undermine security," the lawyers said in their lawsuit.

CAIRO (AP).—The Arab League welcomed on Wednesday peace talks between the Sudanese government and southern rebels but stressed that Africa's biggest nation should remain united in any settlement.

On Wednesday, representatives of the Sudanese government and rebels held a second day in a new round of peace talks in Ethiopia. The talks concentrated on the boundaries of southern Sudan and the role of the Islam in that region.

In May, the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) agreed in principle to hold an internationally supervised referendum on po-

sible independence for southern Sudan — but they did not agree on the territory involved.

"The secretariat-general of the Arab League expresses its hope that this round leads to achieving peace and ending the war in southern Sudan," said the statement by the 22-member Arab League.

But the statement added that the league "reconfirms its fixed stance based on preserving the unity of Sudan's peoples and territories." The SPLA has been fighting various governments since 1983 for greater autonomy for the south, which is the largely African, Christian and animist, from the Islamic and Arab north.

"The strikers have been trying to stop them and that has been the main cause of tensions," he said.

The sides are awaiting a judge's ruling to settle a dispute over which facilities can operate, said Capt. Max Torrens, spokeswoman for the base.

The strike has disrupted life at bases in Ankara, Izmir as well as at Incirlik air base, near the southern city of Adana, home to 2,000 service members and centre for a major air operation over Iraq. The action has shut down the commissary, gas station, dining halls and other facilities.

"We are determined to keep up our struggle until the end," said Ibrahim Yalcin, deputy head of Harb-is, the Union of Defence Industry and Allied Workers that organised the strike.

"Whichever side has the superior power to resist, will win." The strikers are demanding better pay and fringe benefits.

Mr. Yalcin accused the U.S. Air Force of breaking Turkish laws by getting servicemen to take on duties normally done by the strikers, including repair work and garbage collecting.

An airman and a striker were briefly detained in the first week of the strike after altercations over the use of a facility. They were released when a prosecutor said the case was not worth pursuing.

The air base was forced to lift a travel restriction to Incirlik village and Adana to allow service members to resupply off-base after the shut down of all shopping and feeding facilities.

Last Saturday a U.S. airman, Robert Rodriguez, was assaulted in the parking lot of a supermarket in Adana.

According to his account reported by the base spokeswoman, he was attacked from behind, thrown to the ground, kicked and punched by at least four persons while unlocking his vehicle.

with him, said Mr. Torrens.

The assailants ran away when crowds began to form outside the supermarket. Mr. Rodriguez sustained non-life threatening injuries.

Police said they did not know the motive. The labour union said the attack had nothing to do with the strikers.

Incirlik, some 40 kilometres northeast of Adana, is home to "Operation Northern Watch," which patrols the no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel in northern Iraq. More than 45 U.S. and British planes monitor Iraq's treatment of the Kurds in the zone.

The strikers are demanding that salaries be raised every three months in line with inflation, now running around 70 per cent, as well as compensation for earlier pay cuts, Mr. Yalcin said.

He said the workers have been offered a one-time payment of \$400, a 37 per cent increase in the first year followed by three monthly increases in line with inflation the second year.

Thursday Programmes

15:10 Cartoon — Animated
Film Classics

15:30 *Catwee* — The Animal Park

16:00 *Dix* — L'École des Enfants

16:30 *Doe* — Blue Water

Dreaming

17:00 NBA

18:15 Sliders

19:00 Le Journal

19:15 Science Magazine —
(L'Oeil De Colomb)

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Comedy — Family Matters

20:00 The Great Romances

20:30 Drama — Dr. Quinn the
Medicine Woman

21:10 Oprah Winfrey

22:00 News in English

22:30 Feature film — "The
Night Before"

24:00 Comedy — Can't Hurry
Love

00:30 End of T.X.

Friday Programmes
15:10 Cartoon — The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin
15:30 The Borrowers
16:00 Feature film — "Fire Over England"
18:15 French quiz show — Les Clés de Fort Boyard
19:00 Le Journal
19:15French Programme — Allo La Terre
19:30News Headlines
19:35Comedy — The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
20:00Life on the Digital Edge
20:30 Understanding Computing
21:10 Babylon-5
22:00News in English

22:30Mini-sessions—When
Love Kills (Pt II of II)
23:59End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:22Fajr
05:49(Sunrise) Duha
12:41Dhuhr
16:22‘Asr
19:34Maghreb
21:01‘Isha

The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 36324787
The English-Language
Catholic Parish Tel. 36141490
Evangelical Free Church Tel.
892679
The Baptist Church Tel.
3628082
The Armenian Catholic
Church Tel. 774351
The Armenian Orthodox
Church Tel. 775261

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeth, Tel. 5920740

Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4633785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

Terra Sancta Church Tel.
4622366

Anglican Church Tel.
4624853/4624811.

St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox
Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church
Tel. 865897

German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Lat-
ter Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la
Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel.
4646138

Church of Presentation, Swei-
feth Tel. 5920146

WEATHER

*Bulletin supplied by the Depart-
ment of Meteorology*

Hot weather conditions will
persist over the weekend with
winds northwesterly moderate.

In Agaba it will be hot, winds
northerly moderate, and seas
calm.

Amman	23/35
Agaba	27/41
Deserts	22/40
Jordan Valley	27/41

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman	35.
Agaba	41
Humidity readings: Amman	
27 per cent, Agaba	27 per cent.

Following are the highest tem-
peratures expected today in the
following areas:

Ajloun	29
Jerash	36
Um Qays	34
Madaba	35
Petra	36

Head Seas	45	plants	478711
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS		Telephone Information Bureau (RASHMATEC)	121
		Overseas Calls	010230
NIGHT DUTY MEDICAL:		Central Amman Telephone Repairs	4623101
Dr. Abdul Rashid Mustafa	474685	Abdali Tel. Repairs	566101
Dr. Ismail Asmar	3805934	Jordan Television	477311
Yousef Naser	4751144	Radio Jordan	477411
Nidal Asad	4751672	Water Authority	5680100
		J. Electricity Authority	5815615
		Electric Power Co.	4636381

Aldreds pharmacy 778336
 Alsona pharmacy 4637055
 Alsalim pharmacy 463672
 Alsalim pharmacy 463673
 Ascorub pharmacy 464045
 Almansaisi pharmacy 4637644
 Aljilji pharmacy 5347632
 LBD:
 Al Al Shugairi 7110099
 Quds pharmacy 1-1
 ARQA:
 Dr. Hafez Nalfidi 914144
 Alhalif pharmacy 9K85417

EMERGENCIES

Arab Control Centre 4637111
 Arab Defence Department 566111
 Arab Defence Immediate Res-
 ponsibility 4630341
 Arab Defence Emergency 199
 Arab Police 192 4632111, 463777
 Arab Brigade 4617101
 Arab Bank 4775121
 Arab Highway Police 5343402
 Arab Police 4896390
 Arab Police 4630321
 Arab Security Dept. 5605800
 Arab Complaints 5661176
 Arab & Foreign Complaints 4637487
 Arab Municipality Com-
 plaints 4630056

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
 The Arab Centre for Heart and
 Special Surgery 5921199
 The Islamic, Abdi 56661317
 Hussein Medical Centre
 Tel 5858656
 Izzulma 4631195
 Khalidi Maternity 46421816
 Al-Akher Maternity 46424422
 Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
 Palestine, J. Amman 4636140
 Maltesin, Shmeisani 5607071
 Shmeisani Hospital 5669131
 University Hospital 5355444
 Al-Muasher Hospital 56672279
 Al-Ahli, Abudjen 56641646
 Italian, Al-Muhagreen 47771013
 Al-Bashir 477511126
 Army, Marka 489161165
 Queen Alia Hospital 560234050
 Amal Hospital 5674155
 ZARQA:
 Zarqa Govt. Hospital 109683323
 Zarqa National Hospital 099000560

Abn Sina Hospital.....	09/986752	08:55	.....Doha (RJ)
Al Fikma Modern Hospital.....	09/990990	19:10	.....Athens (RJ)
ABRID:		19:30	Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
Princess Basma Hospital.....		19:45	Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
.....012/275555		23:55	.....Larnaca (RJ)
Greek Catholic Hospital.....	012/372275		
Abn Al Nafees Hospital.....	02/247100		
AQABAS:			
Princess Haya Hospital.....		08:55	.....Dubai (EK)
		13:00	.....Kuwait (KU)
		13:00	.....Riyadh (SV)
		14:10	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
		15:10	.....Sharjah (AH)

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel 4453200 where it should always be verified.

Information on other flights are available on phone 44 (52700) or 44 (53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights:

06:05	.....Sana'a (RJ)	19:00	.....Doha (QR)
09:45	.....New Delhi (RJ)	20:25	.....Paris (AF)
00:00	.....Bombay (RJ)	21:00	.....Tel Aviv (LY)
05:05	.....Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)	21:10	.....Cairo (MS)
06:20	.....Bahrain (RJ)	22:30	.....London (BA)
06:25	.....Beirut (RJ)	23:20	.....Beirut (ME)
07:40	.....Muscat, Dubai (RJ)	23:20	.....Manbu (TK)
1:00	.....Colombo (RJ)	23:35	.....Amman (CY)
5:55	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)	00:05	.....Moscow (SU)
7:30	.....London (RJ)	01:15	.....Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
8:45	.....Kuwait (RJ)	04:20	.....Tunis (TU)
		05:20	.....Antalia (TK)

Royal Wings (RW)
(For Thursday and Friday)

10:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)

18:00 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport on Thursday and Friday) (RW)

20:20Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA on Friday only). (RW)

22:35 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA on Thursday only) (RW)

23:25 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

06:45	Beirut (RJ)
11:35	Abu Dhabi, Al'Ain (RJ)
12:15	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:20	Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:45	Kuwait (RJ)
13:00	Doha (RJ)
13:10	Paris (RJ)
13:15	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:20	Athens (RJ)
13:25	London (RJ)
20:35	Larnaca (RJ)
21:00	Madrid (RJ)

21:25 Cairo (RU)
22:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RU)
00:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RU)

Other Flights
06:15 Istanbul (TK)
07:50 Frankfurt (LH)
08:20 London (BA)
09:55 Dubai (EK)
09:55 Damascus, Dubai (RU)
12:00 Kuwait (KU)
14:30 Riyadh (SV)
15:00 Abu Dhabi (GF)
16:30 Annahs, Algiers (AR)
16:30 Doha (QR)
21:10 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:00 Cairo (MS)
23:55 Beirut (ME)
01:30 Moscow (SU)
02:15 Amsterdam (KL)
05:20 Beirut, Tunis (TU)

Royal Wings
(For Thursday and Friday)
08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Air-
port) (RW)
09:30 Aqaba (from Marka Air-
port) on Thursday and Friday
(RW)
22:45 Tel Aviv (from QAIA —
on Thursday only) (RW)

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Bar association considers legal action over water scandal

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan Bar Association (JBA) on Wednesday joined a handful of civic institutions considering plans to sue the government in connection with the water pollution crisis that has scared the nation.

"We are studying the issue of filing a law suit against the government," said a JBA official who requested anonymity. "We believe that anyone who was affected by the crisis, including individuals and associations, can sue," he added.

The Consumer Protection Society (CPS) and several women organisations have asked the JBA to examine the possibilities of suing the government over the water problem, while columnists in local dailies have been urging citizens to initiate legal action and to investigate possible official negligence.

The government, after making contradictory statements, last week blamed the crisis on human error at the Zai Water Treatment Plant (ZWTP), the main source of water supply to Amman.

Officials have said water is not contaminated but did not spell out the source of murky and foul-smelling domestic water supplies that was pumped into many citizens' homes — especially those in west Amman — beginning July 10.

The scare was further compounded by two reports prepared by a Lower House of Parliament committee and U.S.-based Stanley Consultants that said water treated at ZWTP contained algae, shirtd.

The CPS specifically wants to try the ministers of water and health for creating a nationwide scare.

However, some lawyers said the CPS, as a non-governmental organisation, may not have the authority to sue the government. Instead, they prefer that Amman residents themselves take action individually.

Others fear that those responsible will never be tried.

Meanwhile, an independent commission has been appointed by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday to investigate the water crisis.

Committee recommends mobile licence; Fastlink negotiates settlement

By Ahmed Naser
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government's Higher Ministerial Committee for Privatisation on Tuesday recommended granting the Jordan Telecommunication Company (JTC) a fixed telephony licence and another to operate a mobile phone network.

According to telecom industry sources, JTC has so far applied for the fixed telephony licence more than 20 times over the past three years and three switches of telecommunication ministerial posts, from Jamal Sarai, to Basam Saket, and to current Minister of Telecommunications Sami Gammo, but each time its licence application was sent back for a redraft.

The mobile phone provision licence has been a matter of contention between the government and Jordan Mobile Telephone Services (Fastlink), which claims that no other provider should be licensed before its own monopoly ends in October.

The 1995 Telecommunications Law stipulates that two new licences for the operation of mobile phone networks will only be issued in an open tender after the end of Fastlink's exclusivity licence.

Fastlink, which paid JD24 million for four years of exclusivity upon its inception in 1994, initiated a law suit against the government for its declaration that it would grant JTC a mobile phone licence.

At the beginning of this year, officials were quoted as saying that granting a licence to JTC to offer mobile services was meant to enhance the company's value ahead of the sale of 40 per cent of its equity to a strategic partner.

Officials told the Jordan Times that a settlement between the government and Fastlink outside court is being negotiated. However, industry sources said that the negotiations have not moved ahead for the past two months.

Earlier this week, Ali Shukri, JTC's newly-appointed chairman, told journalists that whatever the settlement reached between the government and Fastlink, "there will always be interconnect fees."

Fastlink pays the JTC 60 fils per minute interconnect fees for calls initiated from mobiles to regular telephones. The company also pays the government a 20 per cent royalty on gross revenue.

In May, after Fastlink obtained a syndicated loan from 10 banks to enhance its network, David Bosworth, the firm's chief executive officer, was quoted as saying: "I am very optimistic that we will reach a settlement with the government shortly."

House boosts capital to JD100,000 for weeklies

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Parliament yesterday resembled a stock market trading floor as deputies began debating capital requirements for weekly and daily newspapers.

Lower House deputies shouted out all sorts of figures before finally agreeing on capital requirement for periodicals during the second day of discussion of the House's amended version of the Press and Publications draft law.

The government's controversial draft had originally set the capital requirement for dailies at JD500,000 and JD150,000 for weeklies — considerably higher than the JD15,000 requirement accorded in the 1993 Press and Publications law in force today.

The House National Guidance Committee (NGC), which gave the draft a second reading, left the JD500,000 requirement for dailies in place, but lowered the requirement for weekly newspapers from JD150,000 to JD50,000.

Deputies haggled for more than an hour over capital requirements, proposing figures ranging from JD250,000 to JD1 million for dailies, and from 25,000 to 200,000 for non-dailies. When put to vote, the House voted in favour of the NGC's JD500,000 proposal for dailies, but disregarded the committee's recommendation for weeklies' capital requirements and boosted the capital to JD100,000.

"I agree with the recommendations of the committee. The press is an institution that carries our national message and is a civilised tool of expression. We want it to stand on its feet," said Deputy Mohammad Azaideh, head of the House Public Freedoms Committee.

"Increasing the capital requirement will curb the number of weekly publications — a cause of headache for many people," said Deputy Bassam Haddadin. "But we are not here to prosecute the weeklies, and we must acknowledge the significant role they played in raising the ceiling of freedom."

"It is wrong to believe that raising the capital requirement will put an end to the problem," Mr. Haddadin told the House.

Deputy Hamad Abu Zaid asked the House to raise the capital requirements to JD1 million for dailies and JD200,000 for weeklies.

Deputy Lutfi Barghouti shared the concerns of his colleague.

"We don't want to transform this country into a media market," he warned the House.

The House also agreed with the committee's proposal to throw out Article 14, which required that owners of daily and non-daily newspapers place a JD100,000 and JD50,000 bank guarantee, respectively, in Ministry of Information accounts to ensure payment of fines levied against those found in violation of the law.

"This article preserves the rights of people and is an incentive for journalists to ensure accuracy and objectivity [in his/her reports]," said Deputy Soudki Shhattat, who argued in favour of keeping the article in place.

Other deputies disagreed, saying bank guarantees were another way of restricting the work of daily and weekly publications.

"We are placing requirements that are impossible to meet," Deputy Nazih Ammarin said. "We are barring journalists from practising their rights and are limiting the industry to a certain class."

The House also voted in favour of the committee's changes to Article 11 of the 60-article law. The article, as it appeared in the government's draft, grants a licence to issue a publication to "the press company that was established and registered for the purpose of issuing a publication which shall not have more than 25 per cent of its equity from foreign sources."

The amendment approved by the House scrapped foreign equity altogether and restricted investment in the local press to Jordanians, companies owned by Jordanian citizens, and legalised political parties.

"I believe that decision of the committee protects our press' national identity," said Deputy Mahmoud Kharabshah, speaker of the National Guidance Committee.

Road accidents on increase; traffic institute notes startling figures

AMMAN (J.T.) — The director of the traffic institute Wednesday warned that road accidents are on the increase in Jordan causing heavy human and economic losses to the Kingdom.

In a lecture to the Amman Rotary Club, Lieutenant Colonel Jamil Salim said in the past five years 2,481 citizens were killed in traffic accidents. Another 69,088 were injured.

The number of road accidents in 1980 was 12,433 but the figure jumped to 39,005 in 1997, said Lt. Col. Salim, who said the high cost of dealing with the cost of traffic accidents place an undue strain on the country's society and economic resources.

He estimated that Jordan annually incurs JD800 million in economic losses as a result of road accidents, corresponding to 2.9 per cent of the country's gross domestic product.

While advanced nations lose one citizen in road accidents for every 10,000 vehicles, Jordan loses 16 citizens annually for a similar number of vehicles, he noted.

Lt. Col. Salim said the traffic problem began to emerge in the early 1970s following a substantial increase in the population, and therefore, an increase in the number of vehicles on the expanding network of roads.

He called for integrated programmes to spread awareness among the different sectors of the public to cut down on the number of road accidents and fatalities.

Lt. Col. Salim referred to Jordan's recently implemented "points system" and its regulations, saying it is designed to control traffic and curtail accidents. He explained that the new system is designed to help authorities take action against repeat traffic offenders by recording points for every major offence committed by both Jordanian and foreign drivers.

He said this system charts 33 types of traffic violations.

His Royal Highness Prince Firas Ben Rasad, the health secretary of His Majesty King Hussein, called for the creation of a higher traffic council. He said cooperation among concerned government departments to stop Jordan's drain of human and economic resources was needed.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- JERASH FESTIVAL**
- Thursday and Friday**
- Concert by Abdul Majeed Abdullah of Saudi Arabia at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m. (There will be another performance on Saturday Aug. 8 at 8:30 p.m.)
 - Concert by the Mayal Group (Al-Bait Theatre) of Palestine at the North Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
 - Jordanian play "Taqaem Al-Anbar" at Artimes Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
 - Performance by Shenzhen Children's Art Ensemble of China at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
 - Performances by the Jordan Armed Forces Orchestra (6:30 p.m.), Jordan's Hannounah Group (7:00 p.m.), Mladost Folklore Group of Slovakia (8:00 p.m.), the Iraqi National Group (9:00 p.m.), Sakumoh Group of Zimbabwe (10:00 p.m.), and U.K. Five-Star Circus (11:00 p.m.) at the Forum.
- LECTURE**
- "Humeima 1998" by Dr. John Oleson at the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR), near the University of Jordan on Friday Aug. 7 at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 534-6117).
- FILM**
- "The Great Outdoors" at the American Center, Abdoun, on Thursday Aug. 7 at 5:00 p.m.
- EXHIBITIONS**
- Photo exhibition on India at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 6.
 - "Exhibition of Arab Sculptors" at the garden of the Weibdeh Muntazah, Jabel Weibdeh, until Aug. 8.
 - "The Small Sculptors Exhibition" at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Aug. 8.
 - Display of products at Jordan Design Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Sagra (Tel. 5699141/2), until August 6.

Circassian dancers' foot work draws the crowds to Jerash



AL JIL AL JADID: The Circassian dance troupe revives folkloric tradition each year at the Jerash Festival

By Dana Abu Sham
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A local Circassian folklore dance troupe attracted larger audiences than most of the famous Arab and international groups which performed at this year's Jerash Festival.

An estimated 6,000 spectators from all walks of life flocked to the South-Amphitheatre of the ancient city, to watch an outstanding performance by the Al Jil Al Jadid, whose Jordanian dancers portrayed a masterpiece of the Circassian heritage that kept the audience on their feet throughout most of the show.

Attended by His Royal Highness Prince Ali, honorary president of the club, the amphitheatre was full of life, reminding the audience of the Romans thousands of years ago.

"Three years ago I went to Caucasus, and I promised to help them out, because these people contributed to building this country when they first came," Prince Ali told the Jordan Times.

Jordan has been home to a substantial Circassian community, now numbering about 30,000. They arrived in Jordan in 1890 after having been defeated by the Russians during the 50 Years War in the Caucasus and, consequently, were evicted from their homeland.

Fifty dancers, aged 16-21, filled the stage with magnificently coloured costumes.

The troupe rehearses four times a week, four hours a day to get to acquire a high standard of performance.

Al Jil Al Jadid Club, established in 1950, aimed to revive and maintain the Circassian rich and deeply-rooted heritage. Jordan's two Circassian folkloric troupes — Al Jil and Al Ahli Club — have alternated turns on the Jerash stage for nine consecutive years.

Al Jil itself has represented Jordan at several international activities worldwide, performing in the United States, the former Soviet Union, France and Rhodes.

Pre-marital tests could curb genetic diseases, medical expenses

By Suha Ma'ayeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Officials are promoting pre-marital tests to curb a rising number of genetically-transmitted diseases whose treatment is costing Jordan millions of dinars.

But in a conservative country, many to-be couples are resisting such tests because of strict social taboos and fear that it might expose infertility-related problems that might scuttle their marriage plans.

"The Health Ministry launched the idea of the mandatory tests five years ago but told to-be couples it remained up to them to consider trying the knot if genetic tests proved their children might develop some hereditary diseases.

"Many couples resist the idea of conducting such tests because they think that they are related to fertility and if tests prove positive this will be an obstacle in their marriage," said Ghada Hussein from the Hussein Medical Centre, one of the country's 29 government-run institutions conducting such blood and genetic tests.

Many doctors and religious leaders have said these tests have been largely ignored.

The Ministry of Health and Medical Care, which spends more than JD3 million on 1,000 patients of thalassaemia — a genetically determined defect in haemoglobin synthesis — recently approved plans to allow such tests to be carried out for free at its various centres that also offer family counselling and other help with genetic diseases.

Non-governmental organisations are also launching media campaigns to encourage such tests and insist on privacy.

"Many need to know why such tests are recommended, as some think they are only related to fertility," said one doctor. "But many of those who conducted such tests understood their nature and began helping us in spreading the message," she told the Jordan Times.

A 1992 population-based study of consanguineous marriages in Jordan, which surveyed 2,000 households, found that 32.03 per cent of marriages were among first cousins, 6.8 per cent among second cousins, 10.5 per cent among distant cousins and 50 per cent among couples who had familial relation.

More than 130,000 people out of the Kingdom's 4.2 million people suffer from various disabilities, including mental and physical retardation, according to recent figures released by the Ministry of Social Development.

Some doctors and sociologists say a steadily increasing number of Thalassaemia patients encouraged the government to forge ahead with promoting the idea of free pre-marital tests to help avoid hereditary diseases.

Osama Badran, director of Maternal and Child Health Care at the Ministry of Health, said the number of thalassaemia patients, is increasing by 100 every year as "carriers of this hereditary disease are still getting married to each other."

Patients of the disease, common in Mediterranean countries, suffer from haemolytic anaemia due to the destruction of the red blood cells. They are sick, pale and suffer from an enlarged spleen and delayed growth. It occurs most frequently in people of Italian, Greek, Middle Eastern, South Asian and African ancestry.

A 1997-98 study of thalassaemia in Jordan conducted by associate university professor Nayef Gharaybeh found that 12 per cent of the overall population are carriers of thalassaemia.

Dr. Gharaybeh, director of the health centre at the University of Science and Technology, studied 1,000 samples.

"This is an alarming issue and should be taken seriously," he told the Jordan Times.

Dr. Gharaybeh said another study he conducted in 1996-97 of 251 couples who had a family history of thalassaemia found that 22 per cent of them were carriers of the gene.

"All forms of thalassaemia are genetically-transmitted...they cannot be caught from another child who has it," Dr. Badran said.

"Individual carriers are healthy but when they become parents there is a one in four chance that any child they have will inherit a thalassaemia gene from each parent and have a severe form of the disease."

There is also a two-in-four chance that the child will inherit one of each kind of gene and become a carrier like his or her parents; and a one in four chance that the child will inherit two normal genes from its parents and be completely free of the disease or carrier state," Dr. Badran explained.

"These odds are the same for each pregnancy when both parents are carriers," added Dr. Badran, also chief of the health ministry's premarital counselling committee.

Mustafa Al Falah, a haematologist at the state-run Al Bashir Hospital, said a thalassaemia child becomes anaemic at between 3 and 18 months of age.

"If they are not treated, they usually die between the age of one and eight," he said.

"Patients are treated with frequent blood transfusions every three to four weeks to maintain their haemoglobin at near normal levels," Dr. Falah added.

"Unfortunately, repeated blood transfusions lead to a build-up of iron in the body, which can damage the heart, liver and other organs."

Most children who have these transfusions grow normally into their early twenties, but to live longer, Dr. Falah said, they need other treatment to remove the extra iron from the body.

"This treatment is expensive, unpleasant and often upsetting."

thalassaemia patients are treated with a drug referred to as an iron chelator — an iron-binding agent that can help rid the body of excess iron, preventing or delaying problems related to iron overload.

The medicine is usually administered daily via a mechanical pump that pushes the drug underneath the skin while the child is sleeping.

Dr. Falah said that thalassaemia has also been cured by using bone marrow transplants, though such treatment remains limited.

"This form of treatment is possible only for a small minority of patients who [can find] a suitable bone marrow donor. The procedure is risky and can result in death," he said.

Doctors in the medical community are trying to promote pre-marital tests across the Kingdom in order to control hereditary diseases.

Ghada Hussein, at the Hussein Medical Centre stressed the importance of conducting pre-marital tests which include blood tests and family genetic studies that can show whether an individual has thalassaemia.

"The disease can't be prevented at this time, but a programme of health education, testing for the trait, genetic counselling, and prenatal diagnosis can provide families with full medical information to help them have healthy children."

Fighting continues around Congo military base

KINSHASA (AFP) — Rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Wednesday continued their campaign to oust President Laurent Kabila, called a "dangerous man" by his own foreign minister.

Fighting was reported in the east, the seat of the rebellion by ethnic Tutsi soldiers, as well as in the northeastern city of Kisangani and around the strategic Kitona military base, in the southwest.

Tuesday a commercial plane was hijacked in the eastern city of Goma and flown to Kitona, with Kinshasa claiming that 400 Rwandan troops were aboard backing the rebels.

Tuesday the Kabila government accused Rwanda of invading the eastern Kivu region and sending in heavily armed troops to back the rebels, and the DRC's delegation to the United Nations in New York has asked the Security Council to tell Rwanda to withdraw them.

Government spokesman Didier Mumeni said Kinshasa was preparing a "vigorous response" after the alleged troop movement to Kitona, which is in Bas Congo province bordering Congo and Angola, more than 500 kilometres from Kinshasa.

Kitona's large military base, the closest to Kinshasa, was used up to recently by Rwandan Tutsi commanders to train units in the new DRC army.

But soldiers in the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan army — who helped bring Mr. Kabila to power last year — were last week asked to leave the DRC, which prompted the uprising by

the Banyamulenge, as ethnic Tutsis are known in the DRC. They are originally from Rwanda.

Meanwhile in South Africa, DRC Foreign Minister Bizima Karaha turned against Mr. Kabila, telling Wednesday's The Star newspaper that Mr. Kabila took just a year to become as ruthless a dictator as the man he deposed from a 32-year reign, Mobutu Sese Seko.

Mr. Karaha, who has been in South Africa for several days, is expected to seek asylum along with other top officials who have left the DRC.

He predicted that the rebellion that erupted at the weekend would force Mr. Kabila to flee the country "like Mohutu" within a month.

Mr. Karaha, a Banyamulenge who helped bring Mr. Kabila to power last year, said he had "distanced himself from a dangerous man."

Reports on fighting elsewhere in the DRC varied. Witnesses in Kisangani, reached from Nairobi early Wednesday, said fighting had resumed there after a quiet night.

But DRC Justice Minister Mwenze Kongolo, speaking to AFP Wednesday, refuted the report, saying: "There's nothing at Kisangani."

As for Kinshasa, Mr. Kongolo said government troops had put down a Banyamulenge revolt.

He said several dozen Banyamulenge, who had been hiding out in the capital's western suburbs, had surrendered to the authorities and had been arrested by the armed forces.

"There's nothing (of the rebellion) left in Kinshasa," Mr. Kongolo said.

Even if the rebels have officially been put down in Kinshasa, witnesses said Mr. Kabila loyalists were conducting new sweeps in working-class neighbourhoods to ferret out Banyamulenge.

However, the centre of the Banyamulenge soldiers' revolt is in Kivu, where between 250,000 and 400,000 Banyamulenge live, having immigrated there since the late 18th century from neighbouring Rwanda.

Asked for an update on the situation there, Mr. Kongolo said fighting was continuing in Bukavu, capital of South Kivu province, which the rebels claim to control along with the airport and surrounding area.

"There is tension in Bukavu and fighting is continuing," he said, without stating whether government forces were in control of the city.

However rebel troops near Bukavu, guarding the border with Rwanda, told AFP early Wednesday that it was quiet in Bukavu and that there had been no fighting overnight.

"There's no more fighting. It's been quiet since yesterday afternoon. People are resuming their daily activities and have begun to walk in the streets," said one guard.

"The border is closed because we do not want to take the risk that something might happen to a foreigner coming from over there (in Rwanda). You never know where the enemy may come from," he said.



A firefighter carries 'Bobby' the dog of a 13-year-old boy who was found dead under a collapsed Berlin apartment block. Three people have been found dead in the rubble and up to four more people were still feared buried in the debris of the four-storey building, destroyed in a suspected gas explosion (Reuters photo)

Boy, two others found dead in Berlin flat rubble

BERLIN (R) — A 13-year-old boy buried under a collapsed Berlin apartment block was found dead Wednesday after firefighters had dug with their bare hands through the night in a frantic effort to save him.

The bodies of two elderly people were discovered earlier. "We have had news — three people have been found dead in the rubble," Berlin police chief Hagen Saberschnitzky told journalists at the scene.

Up to four more people

were still feared buried in the debris of the four-storey building, destroyed Tuesday in a suspected gas explosion.

Officials said the body of the boy, identified only as Seven, was recovered near the bottom of the building. His dog had been freed by rescue workers several hours earlier.

Rescuers had initially been hopeful of finding the teenager alive after hi-tech listening equipment detected a heartbeat in the rubble. The fire brigade had

worked through the night using sniffer dogs, machinery and their bare hands.

Firefighters said recovery work at the site was likely to last all through Wednesday, hindered by the risk that further parts of the building could collapse.

Of the building's 21 residents, 14 suffered minor injuries or were known to be away from home. One resident spent several hours under the rubble before rescuers reached him.

Japanese court orders state, road authorities to pay pollution damages

TOKYO (AP) — Ending a 15-year dispute, a court ordered the Japanese government and road authorities Wednesday to pay a total of 149 million yen (\$1.03 million) to 48 people who suffered asthma and other illnesses caused by air pollution.

The Yokohama District Court ordered the state and the Metropolitan Expressway Public Corp. to make the payment, a court official said, on condition of anonymity. The state was held responsible as the caretaker of major roads in the affected areas.

Katsusuke Ogawa, presiding judge at the court's Kawasaki branch, said that the plaintiffs, who have lived within 50 metres from major arteries in Kawasaki, suffered asthma and other ailments caused by exhaust emitted from automobiles.

But Katsusuke Ogawa rejected an injunction

appeal by the plaintiffs for a halt to the discharge of air-polluting substances, saying that the danger from their suffering was not imminent.

Wednesday's ruling came two years after a group of 14 Japanese companies in Kawasaki, a major industrial city adjoining Tokyo, reached an out-of-court settlement. The companies agreed to pay 3.1 billion yen (\$21.5 million) to 438 people who complained of illness from air pollution.

In 1994, the Yokohama District Court ruled that the 14 companies were responsible for the pollution and they should pay 460 million yen (\$3.2 million) in compensation to the plaintiffs, but both sides appealed to a higher court.

The suit was originally filed against the state and the road authorities and a group of companies in March 1982. Other people, who have been designated

as patients of the so-called Kawasaki disease, and family members of victims, later joined the suit. The plaintiffs demanded a total of 6.38 billion yen (\$44.3 million) in compensation.

Of about 6,000 patients suffering from asthma or other related Kawasaki disease ailments, some 1,800 have died, with many of the deaths asthma-related, Kyodo News reported.

Officials from the Construction Ministry, the Environment Agency and the Metropolitan Expressway Public Corp. said that they would study the contents of Wednesday's ruling and consult with related organizations before deciding whether to appeal.

Last month, some 100 residents in Osaka reached an out-of-court settlement with the state and a local public corporation in a similar air pollution case, ending a 20-year dispute.

Judge clears Mexican drug cartel suspect; rearrested on U.S. warrant

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A man accused of heading Mexico's largest methamphetamine smuggling ring was cleared of money-laundering charges, but federal agents immediately rearrested him on a U.S. extradition request.

A judge in Guadalajara dropped money-laundering charges against Jose de Jesus Amezcua, the federal attorney general's office said Tuesday in a news release. The office said it would appeal.

When Mr. Amezcua, 32, and his brother Luis, 34, were arrested on June 1, the agency announced that it had broken up the country's largest methamphetamine and amphetamine trafficking cartel. Another brother, Adrian, was arrested in November.

Officials never formally charged the Amezcua brothers with drug trafficking, however, and defence attorneys claimed that the only drug evidence pro-

secutors presented came from newspaper stories.

Two earlier counts of money laundering and criminal association were dismissed soon after the June arrests.

The attorney general's office said federal anti-drug police arrested Jose de Jesus Amezcua on a U.S. extradition request as he was leaving the Puente Grande prison near Guadalajara.

Mr. Luis and Adrian Amezcua remained in prison on the money-laundering charge.

In June, a federal grand jury in California indicted Jose de Jesus and Mr. Luis on charges of manufacturing and distributing methamphetamine; conspiracy to possess opium, a component of "meth" or "speed," and continuing a criminal enterprise.

Authorities contend the brothers contacted suppliers in India, Germany,

China and elsewhere to buy meth ingredients, and set up labs to make the finished product in the United States and Mexico.

Jose de Jesus Amezcua previously was indicted in 1993 on cocaine charges, and Luis Amezcua was already under a 1994 indictment for meth making.

In December, U.S. drug agents rounded up more than 80 people linked to the alleged gang, including the purported Los Angeles and Dallas cell leaders.

Mexican prosecutors said the brothers had 125 small businesses, farms and other properties and had not paid full taxes due on their income.

The brothers, based in the western state of Colima, said they inherited most of their properties from their father or grandfather and that their family had sold some of those on the government's list 15 years ago.

NEWS IN BRIEF

French language watchdog grows at U.S. feminists

PARIS (R) — One of the staunchest defenders of the French language has found a new enemy in his never-ending battle against linguistic pollution — American feminists. Maurice Druon, secretary of the hallowed Académie Française that guards the language as a national treasure, grumbled Wednesday about a recent fashion for "feminising" titles which, he said, was an American aberration infiltrating French via Quebec. Writing in the conservative daily Le Figaro, he said that "angloricain" — his apparently admissible neologism for the "Anglo-American language" — had sullied French with words such as "prime-time" or "look". "Now, using its Quebec staging post, it ends up perverting our grammar," he fumed. "Do we know where this fashion of feminising titles was born? Certainly not in Canada, but in the United States. Canada was only contaminated through geographical proximity." Mr. Druon and the crusty Académie have been leading a rear-guard attack against the trend towards feminine titles that has gained support from the left-wing government elected last year. Prime Minister Lionel Jospin ruled in March that women cabinet members should be known by the feminine "Madame la Ministre" instead of "Madame le Ministre" as the rules of French grammar require. The government, which has eight women cabinet members mostly in their late 30s or early 40s, also now uses "directrice" instead of "directeur" (director) and "conseillère" instead of "conseiller" (adviser) when women hold those jobs. Mr. Druon said English could easily replace "chairman" with "chairperson" because its grammar had a neuter gender, which French does not. Some French nouns have masculine and feminine forms while others do not and should not, he insisted.

He lamented that French-speaking Belgians had also fallen prey to "Americanism", condemning as laughable the feminine term "sapeuses-pomprières" (firewomen).

Oklahoma executes ex-minister's killer

McALESTER, Oklahoma (AP) — A man who killed three people — including an ex-minister stabbed in prison — was executed by injection early Wednesday. Stephen Edward Wood, 38, had waived his appeals and asked for an early execution. He had no final statement. Two daughters of the Rev. Robert Bruce Bridgen watched their father's killer die. "I do not want to go out of vengeance or anything like that," Susan Welch said. "I have no anger or hatred of this man. I've forgiven him." Wood and another inmate at the Oklahoma State Reformatory in Granite were found guilty of stabbing Bridgen, jailed for molesting young girls, in 1994 with a homemade knife. Wood was in prison for the 1992 killings of two transients. Bridgen was in prison on a 40-year term for molesting young girls at his Presbyterian congregation. His family has maintained his innocence and say he would have won his appeal had he lived.

House panel approves bill to thwart assisted suicides

WASHINGTON (AP) — A House committee has voted to limit doctors' ability to help people die. "I am concerned about old people who don't want to be a burden on their families," said Judiciary Chairman Henry Hyde, the bill's author, before the committee approved the bill on a voice vote Tuesday and sent it to the floor. The vote came after 2 1/2 hours of debate, where Democrats argued that the bill will discourage doctors from providing adequate pain medication. Their attempts to water down the measure failed. The bill would prohibit the dispensing or distribution of a federally regulated drug for the purpose of assisting a suicide. Doctors who violate the law could lose their license to prescribe such drugs and possibly face criminal prosecution. A Senate version has been the subject of a hearing but has not yet been voted on. A Judiciary Committee spokeswoman said the committee will likely schedule a vote after it returns from the August recess.

Authorities charge suspected polygamist with incest

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — An alleged polygamist who deputies say married his brother's 16-year-old daughter has been charged with incest and unlawful sexual conduct with a minor. The girl, who turned 17 Monday, is believed by authorities to have been secretly married last October to her 32-year-old uncle, David O. Kingston, a union arranged by her father. Under Utah law, sexual relations with a niece or nephew is considered incest. The girl's father, John Daniel Kingston, already is charged with beating her for running away from the match, authorities said. The girl told authorities she was David Kingston's 15th wife. She went to police after the alleged beating in May, triggering a widespread public debate over the practice of plural marriage. Salt Lake County Sheriff Aaron Kennard said at a news conference Tuesday that a warrant has been issued for David Kingston, alleging two counts of incest and one count of unlawful sexual conduct with a minor, both third-degree felonies. Mr. Kingston turned himself in late Tuesday and was booked and released. Mr. Kennard said an investigation continues into whether David Kingston would be charged with violating the state's constitutional ban on polygamy. Plural marriage, brought West by the Mormons 151 years ago and denounced by the church in 1890, has persisted among religious splinter groups and hasn't been prosecuted in more than 45 years. Experts estimate there are some 25,000 to 30,000 polygamists in the West. Tuesday's charges were just the latest development in a case that caused Republican Gov. Mike Leavitt to retract his speculation that polygamy may be protected by constitutional guarantees of religious freedom. Article III of the Utah Constitution, while mandating religious tolerance, is explicit: "Polygamous or plural marriages are forever prohibited."

Vietnamese restaurant employs 11 sets of twins

HANOI (AP) — Patrons at a new restaurant can be forgiven for doing double-takes: 11 sets of twins wait on the tables. The appropriately named Twin Restaurant, which opened a month ago in Hu Chi Minh City, is the brainchild of well-known Vietnamese live-song composer Thanh Tung. He got the idea while being served by a twin at a restaurant in the resort city of Nha Trang. He then returned to the country, recruiting 11 sets of twins, and hopes to add another four pairs. All are 19 to 23 years old, with five sets of male twins, five sets of females and one mixed pair. Each pair wears identical clothing every day. Tung said some will start performing live music. The restaurant, which also employs 20 non-twins, serves Vietnamese, Chinese and seafood dishes.

Australia's deputy PM survives leadership vote

SYDNEY (AFP) — Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer survived a vote for leadership of Australia's National Party Wednesday amid continuing convulsions in the ruling coalition over the rise of the far-right One Nation party.

Mr. Fischer and his deputy, Primary Industries Minister John Anderson, were reelected unopposed in a ballot they called themselves to try to snuff out backbench revolt following a rural hacklash against Canberra.

But party officials had to call for unity and warn that anyone who could not guarantee support for Mr. Fischer should not remain in the National Party, the junior partner in coalition with Prime Minister John Howard's Liberals.

Senior National MP Peter McGauran said after the vote that Mr. Fischer's leadership remained secure, adding: "The issue for the National Party today is unity. It's a question of whether or not we are united in the run-up to a federal election."

The latest coalition showdown coincided with warnings that the rural-based Nationals could be wiped out at the general election

expected later this year, after its disastrous showing in the recent Queensland state poll.

A National-led coalition lost office in Queensland in June as Pauline Hanson's anti-immigration One Nation cashed in on rising rural resentment to free-trade, economic rationalist policies championed by Mr. Fischer, who is also trade minister.

Long-standing National Party supporters bitterly oppose government plans to introduce a consumption tax and fully privatise the national communications network Telstra, fearing it would reduce services and increase rural isolation.

In a sign of panic over the shrinking rural support, the cabinet rejected this week a push by the primary industries minister for financial support for wool growers, adopting instead a One Nation policy to freeze sales from a massive wool stockpile.

Mr. Howard ally and high-profile Liberal MP Tony Abbott fuelled opposition fears Wednesday by warning that Labour could win the election expected later this year with a 12-year majority unless the coalition recovered its momentum.

Englishman gets 12 years for drug offence in Australia

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — An Englishman was jailed here Wednesday for 12 years for his part in the illegal importation of drugs into Australia.

In the Supreme Court of Western Australia, Judge Henry Wallwork imposed the sentence on Kenneth Randall, 28, who had pleaded guilty to involvement in an attempt to bring 201,322 Ecstasy tablets and 7,752 amphetamine tablets into Perth.

The tablets had an estimated street value of between 1.2 million and 1.4 million Australian dollars (\$0.73 and \$0.85 million). The judge said

deterrence was the overriding factor in the penalty.

The term had been reduced because of Mr. Randall's early plea of guilty which had saved the community the expense of a trial, he said.

The judge ruled Mr. Randall must serve at least six years before he becomes eligible for parole.

In May, two other Englishmen, Robert Kenneth Bloomfield, 35, and Shaun Michael Hughes, 35, were jailed for 10 years each after pleading guilty to their roles in the importation.

They were ordered to serve a minimum of five years before

being considered for parole.

During their supreme court trial, evidence was given that they were coxswains in the operation in January.

The court heard that Mr. Randall provided the drugs which were concealed in vests Mr. Bloomfield and Mr. Hughes donned in toilets at Heathrow Airport, London.

Mr. Bloomfield was searched by Customs officers at Perth Airport where drugs were found in a vest.

Within hours, Australian Federal Police arrested Mr. Hughes at a Perth city hotel and Mr. Randall at a house in the suburb of Ocean Reef.

celebration with temperatures ranging much of Eastern Europe for heart trouble and su

heat wave s

So hot in the Balkans Tuesday, that gave when ten Hungary screaming ice cream bers. The rice-cream Schoeller boosted shifts to said the In Bu where the least 36 the first 2,500 capital's

Complete election re

The expected Cambodian victory in the parliamentary election was delayed when election officials refused to accept the results of the poll.

Election Chairman Chheng said in a statement that the results of the poll were "not valid" because of irregularities in the counting process.

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Typhoon hits China as another major Yangtze dyke bursts

BEIJING (AFP) —

Typhoon Otto slammed into the east coast of China Wednesday, as attempts to save a second major dyke on the Yangtze River, hit by the worst flooding since 1954, were abandoned.

The dyke near Jiujiang has already burst and the authorities have already abandoned any attempts to contain it, a local journalist told AFP by telephone. "Some people must have died but it's too early to say yet."

Flood prevention officials in Jiujiang and nearby Ruichang confirmed that a major dyke on the main Yangtze River stream had gone, but denied there had been any casualties.

"We had warning, and all the people in the area were evacuated before the dyke went," said a Jiujiang official. He said local authorities were continuing evacuations of local residents from the area on the outskirts of the city but declined to give further details.

Sources Tuesday reported the first major dyke burst of the year in Jiayu

district, some 70 kilometres from Wuhan, with hundreds of soldiers and civilians swept to their deaths.

The Hong Kong-based Information Centre of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China said the surprise break drowned hundreds. But while local officials and the state media acknowledged the accident, they only confirmed one soldier's death.

Xinhua has reported that dykes in the Yangtze basin are in danger of giving way in 3,200 locations, 1,800 of which would cause "major ruptures."

Following rainstorms in the upper reaches of the Yangtze, record high water levels were expected to hit the industrial city of Wuhan Thursday, the official China Daily reported.

Meanwhile typhoon Otto hit the southeast province of Fujian province early Wednesday and was expected to worsen the flood threat in the central and eastern Yangtze basin.

More than two million civilians and soldiers have

been mobilised along the Yangtze to reinforce defences and watch for leaks that can rapidly become deadly ruptures, the official Xinhua news agency said.

Typhoon Otto, which killed four people and left another missing in Taiwan, was pushing north, will likely have the most immediate impact on Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Jiangxi provinces.

Officials have warned the Poyang lake area of Jiangxi to be prepared for pounding rains and winds that could whip up waves and knock down embankments, the China Daily said.

The Yangcheng Evening News reported that leaders in the central province of Hubei had officially abandoned overall flood control and decided to focus on defending main dykes and important cities only.

The change of strategy was decided at an emergency meeting Tuesday, the newspaper said.

In Wuhan, which has seven million inhabitants, the Yangtze rose four centimetres to 29.11 metres

above the riverbed early Wednesday, a local official said.

Water levels could climb as high as 29.25 metres by Aug. 10, he warned.

Local officials admitted this week they had begun blowing up dykes to flood countryside areas and prevent the river from engulfing Wuhan and other key sites.

Xinhua reported Monday that "11 small dykes were dynamited" in Hubei's Xianning county, flooding 10,000 homes and 10,000 hectares of farmland.

Similar measures have also been carried out around Dongting Lake and along the Jingjiang, an tributary of the Yangtze, Xinhua said.

About 1,200 people have been killed in flooding in southern and central China this summer, according to an official toll.

Comprehensive death tolls for China's flooding this year are not available, but the last official tally released on July 28 said that prior to the Yangtze's recent flood peaks, 1,200 people had been killed.

U.S., Philippines conduct military exercise near disputed area

MANILA (AP) — U.S. and Philippine warships and aircraft staged live-fire military exercises Wednesday near a disputed South China Sea shoal, an act that could trigger protests from China.

The 18-hour exercise was held outside the country's territorial waters because of the absence of a bilateral agreement governing exercises in Philippine territory, a Philippine navy spokesman said.

At least five ships and four aircraft joined the exercise, which involved simulated air and naval attacks using cannon fire to hit floating targets, Philippine navy spokesman commander Salvador Cuba said.

China was not notified of the military exercise because it was held in international waters, said Mr. Cuba, adding it was not meant to intimidate any country.

A Filipino navy official, however, said on condition

of anonymity that the exercise was held at one point very near Scarborough Shoal, which is claimed by both the Philippines and China.

There was no immediate reaction from the Chinese embassy in Manila.

Philippine officials say Scarborough, which lies 213 kilometres off Zamboales, is within the country's 200-mile exclusive economic zone. Chinese officials say the shoal has belonged to China since ancient times.

Mr. Cuba said the exercise was held outside the Philippines due to a delay in the Philippine senate's approval of a Visiting Forces Agreement which would provide American troops with legal protections while on duty in the Philippines.

The United States halted all joint exercises in the Philippines and visits by U.S. military ships in December 1996, when the Manila government ended

a legal loophole that had shielded U.S. military personnel from prosecution by the Philippines for crimes committed here.

The Philippine senate has not yet begun deliberations on the accord, which was signed early this year by U.S. and Philippine officials.

Critics say the accord limits the Philippine government's right to prosecute American soldiers who commit crimes.

Despite the absence of the accord, Mr. Cuba said the countries carried out a small-scale naval surveillance exercise in the central Philippines Tuesday that involved 16 U.S. Navy men.

Military ties with the United States have remained a sensitive issue since a nationalist Philippine Senate forced the closure of the last U.S. base in the country in 1992, ending close to a century of American military presence in its former colony.

Retired Indonesia generals urge Suharto probe

JAKARTA (R) — A group of retired Indonesian generals has urged a special military board investigating the abduction of political activists to probe the possible involvement of former President Suharto, a newspaper reported Wednesday.

Armed forces chief General Wiranto announced this week that a military board was investigating three high-ranking officers, including Mr. Suharto's son-in-law Lieutenant-General Prabowo Suharto, over their suspected involvement in the kidnappings.

"If Prabowo was involved, then there is a possibility that Suharto was involved too," former Lieutenant-General Kemal Idris was quoted as saying by the Merdeka daily.

"Suharto, who was highest commander at that time, may have given subtle signals to Prabowo. In the upper circle of the armed forces, instructions may not necessarily come in written form," Indonesia's president has overall command of the country's armed forces.

Former Lieutenant-General Jasir urged Gen. Wiranto to deal harshly with Gen. Prabowo if he was found guilty.

"The fact that Prabowo is Suharto's son-in-law must not exempt him from the law. The board must thoroughly investigate and court-martial him," Gen. Jasir was quoted as saying.

There was no comment on the newspaper story by either Mr. Suharto or Gen. Prabowo.

The kidnappings of anti-Suharto activists stretched from late last year until March, before a rising tide of protest and violence swept Mr. Suharto from power on May 21.

Gen. Wiranto Monday apologised on behalf of the army for failing to stop the kidnappings and the widespread riots and rapes in Jakarta in mid-May, and promised a full investigation.

Human rights groups say almost 1,200 people died and more than 150 women were raped. Some have said the violence was organised.

The former president is already facing an official investigation into corruption during his 32-year rule.



Young Romanian holidaymakers dive into the Black Sea in the port of Constanta, 250 km east of Bucharest, to escape a heatwave with temperatures climbing to 40 degrees Celsius, the highest in more than 40 years. The heat wave, gripping much of Eastern Europe, has killed about 20 people and put pressure on emergency services coping with calls for heart trouble and sunstroke (Reuters photo)

Heat wave sweeps Eastern Europe

BUCHAREST (AP) — Eastern Europe is sizzling from a three-week heat wave that has reportedly claimed at least 20 lives in Romania, buckled streetcar tracks in Hungary and smashed temperature records across the region.

Temperatures soared past 40 C again Tuesday in the southern Balkans region, suffering through its worst heat wave in half a century.

How hot is it? So hot that Serbian forces in Yugoslavia's troubled Kosovo province are heating their haked beans by setting the cans on the fiery metal surface of armoured personnel carriers.

So hot that prison convicts in the Romanian town of Braila refused to work Tuesday, citing a 1986 order that gives them a reprieve when temperatures top 35C.

And so hot that in Hungary, they're all screaming for "fagyalt" — ice cream — in record numbers.

The country's largest ice-cream producer, Schoeller Budapej, has boosted production to three shifts to meet the demand, said the MTI news agency.

In Bucharest, Romania, where the mercury has hit at least 36 C every day since the first half of July, some 2,500 people have called the capital's emergency ser-

vices in the past four days and 15 ambulances are on heat patrol.

Hospitals in the city of 3 million said they are crowded with people who suffered strokes, heart attacks, sunstroke or have fainted in the scorching heat.

Residents are plunging into the city's fountains, the dirty Dambovita River and lakes to keep cool.

Bucharest's mayor, Viorel Lis, is sending the city hall staff home at lunch time every day to avoid any heat-related accidents, and has urged other employers to do the same.

Wheat and corn and sunflowers around the capital

have been burned by the heat.

In Italy, weeks of temperatures above 32 C have sparked a run on air conditioners, with buyers apparently ignoring beliefs held by many Italians that the appliances cause such ailments as sore throats and stiff joints.

"When I made my 84-year-old grandmother let me install air conditioning for her, she made such a fuss about how bad it was," said Franco Consumi, who installs the units for the Rome store GMC. "Now she gets mad at me if I don't go over to check it on the first hot day."

Complete Cambodian election results delayed again

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — The expected announcement of Cambodian leader Hun Sen's victory in last week's parliamentary election was delayed Wednesday when election officials abruptly cancelled their daily briefing to the press.

National Election Committee chairman Chheng Phon said in a written statement that twice-daily briefings were being terminated because of an impromptu news conference held by opposition politicians Tuesday at the committee's media centre.

Their actions endangered the committee's spirit of neutrality, the statement said, and the announcement of official preliminary results of the July 26 elections would be announced instead on state-run television Wednesday afternoon.

Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party is slated to win a slight majority in the 122-National Assembly, according to partial results which have already been released by the NEC.

The election committee's termination of briefings came after it had come under increasing criticism and sharp questioning from the press.

Late Tuesday it became known that its vice chairman, Kassie Neou, had asked to resign as head of its subcommittee handling recounts.

Kassie Neou, a respected human rights worker considered one of the few independent voices on the committee, said he was frustrated by administrative and management problems, according to spokesman Samraing Kamsan, who said that the resignation had not yet been approved.

"Chheng Phon asked him to slow down his anger and told him there was no need to resign," said Samraing Kamsan, acknowledging that organisational problems in the NEC have left many frustrated and over-tired.

The committee, widely seen as being stacked in favour of Hun Sen's ruling party, has been criticised for taking a passive approach to complaints of irregularities. It has also been at the centre

of a controversy over a changed formula for allocating parliamentary seats to the election winners.

Last week it became generally known that a draft formula for the calculations had been slightly amended some time before the election.

The newer method favours the party winning the most seats in any given district. In practice this favours the ruling CPP, providing them with an extra five seats, enough to attain a parliamentary majority.

The committee says the change was legal and approved by the political parties before the election, but has been unable to provide the reasoning behind the change.

The main opposition parties have called on the NEC to recount ballots in areas where they suspect irregularities, threatening to boycott the National Assembly if their concerns are not met.

Wednesday a handful of politicians launched a call for a total recount.

Without the opposition's attendance, the assembly is unlikely to have present the

two-thirds of its 122 members needed to conduct any major business.

"They have the right to request the recount of all ballots, but for this we need a lot of time, money, and people," said spokesman Samraing Kamsan, adding that he doubted the request would get very far.

The recounting of votes from three communes in the southern province of Takeo began Tuesday following several delays, and Wednesday officials were starting on recounts for two communes in Kampong Speu province, just west of the capital.

The election was held one year after Hun Sen ousted Prince Norodom Ranariddh as his co-premier in a violent coup d'etat, shattering a tense dual premiership formed after the U.N.-sponsored elections in 1993. Prince Ranariddh heads the FUNCINPEC party, the main challenger in the election.

Hun Sen hoped the polls would win back his legitimacy in the international arena and aid lost after his power grab.

Kevorkian lawyer leads in Michigan; Kansas governor wins challenge

NEW YORK (AP) — Suicide doctor Jack Kevorkian's combative lawyer held a small lead in Michigan's Democratic gubernatorial primary, while in Kansas, Republican Gov. Bill Graves fended off a challenge from the right.

Primaries also were held in Missouri, where Attorney General Jay Nixon won the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate seat held by Christopher Bond.

In Michigan, Geoffrey Fieger, who has persuaded three juries to acquit the famous suicide doctor, didn't temper his theatrics in his first run for public office. He portrayed himself as an anti-establishment protector of civil rights.

His toughest rival was Larry Owen, a lawyer who has courted unions and party leaders.

With 96 per cent of precincts reporting, Mr. Fieger had 271,220 votes, or 41 per cent, while Mr. Owen had 249,746 votes, or 38 per cent. Former U.S. Labour Department official Doug Ross had 143,723 votes, or 22 per cent.

"Tonight you're seeing the emergence of a new political movement in the state of Michigan," Mr. Fieger told supporters.

In Kansas, Mr. Graves held a 3-to-1 advantage over former state Republican chair-

man David Miller in a recent poll but worried he could be hurt by low turnout among moderates. Mr. Graves spent a record \$1.6 million on the campaign, largely to encourage his supporters to vote.

With 99 per cent of precincts reporting, Mr. Graves had 220,862 votes, or 73 per cent, while Mr. Miller had 82,404 votes, or 27 per cent.

Mr. Graves, enjoying the fruits of a strong economy, has been able to cut taxes \$1.8 billion in his one term. Mr. Miller promised further cuts and said he would freeze state spending for a year. He opposes all abortions except to save a woman's life, while Mr. Graves supports existing abortion laws in Kansas, which restricts access to late-term abortions.

House Minority Leader Tom Sawyer won the Democratic nomination.

Also in Kansas, Sen. Sam Brownback, who was elected in 1996 to finish Bob Dole's term, was unopposed Tuesday's ballot for the Republican nomination. The Democratic nominee is state Sen. Paul Feleciano, a 26-year veteran of the Legislature.

In Missouri, Mr. Bond and Mr. Nixon easily won their primaries.

Mr. Nixon, the top statewide vote-getter in 1996, has lost crucial support lately among blacks because of his efforts to reduce Missouri's spending

on court-ordered school desegregation.

In Michigan, Republican Gov. John Engler is favoured to win a third term, given the state's strong economy and Mr. Engler's nearly two dozen tax cuts.

Mr. Fieger spent more than \$1 million of his own money on the campaign. He proposed reducing the sales tax to 4 per cent from 6 per cent and reducing property taxes 5 per cent across the board.

Although behind in the polls, Mr. Fieger refused to concede anything, calling Mr. Engler "a political hack who's never had a job in his life and doesn't have a singular idea in his skull."

"I find almost everyone I meet in politics... are less than mediocre, have some personal character defect that makes them want to be a politician," Mr. Fieger said.

Mr. Fieger promised early on that Mr. Kevorkian would have no place in his administration. He emphasised that he was not personally in favour of assisted suicide or abortion, but he said he would defend access to both.

Mr. Kevorkian showed up at Mr. Fieger's election party in Detroit, saying he had voted "for the third time in my life. I think."

"He's candid and forthright," Mr. Kevorkian said. "Of all the politicians I know personally, he has more of the positive attributes."

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High time for courage

EGYPTIAN STATEMENTS that the U.S. would finally make public its proposal for an Israeli redeployment from 13 per cent of the West Bank raises some hope that the long stalemate on the Palestinian-Israeli track could be overcome.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's troubleshooter, Osama Al Baz, was quoted Tuesday as saying that his country expects the U.S. to reveal the details of its proposal by August 10.

Considering that President Bill Clinton's administration has already withheld its proposal for more than four months, and that all Israeli counterproposals fell too short of the American plan to deserve any serious consideration, it is high time for a public U.S. announcement.

Some worrisome considerations, however, must be made as to why the U.S. has waited so long. Is the U.S. public now more inclined to put pressure on Israel than it was a couple of months ago? Has anything changed in either Israeli or U.S. policies vis-a-vis the peace process to warrant a shift in U.S. attitude?

Or should we see in the U.S. inclination to finally come out into the open with the redeployment plan to parallel with the escalating tension between the U.S. and Iraq?

Some observers are already suggesting that the U.S. would be seeking to defuse tension in Palestine in order to have a freer hand in dealing with Iraq. Many precedents in the history of U.S. diplomacy suggest that this could very well be the case.

The U.S. could be under the illusion that by breathing some life into the faltering Mideast peace process, the Arab masses would be less frustrated and more willing to turn a blind eye on another strike on Iraq. The Clinton administration might think that some Arab and Muslim governments could soften their stands in light of some progress achieved in Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and make their bases available to U.S. forces, unlike what they did during last February's U.N.-Iraq crisis, when some Gulf states and Turkey said they would not allow U.S. forces to use their soil in an attack on Iraq.

But beyond and above Washington's political game, there are the facts on the ground: The millions of Iraqi children who died during the eight-year sanctions, and the tragedy of the Palestinians and their fifty-year quest for their legitimate land. These will certainly not be brushed aside simply because the U.S. plans to finally make good on something it should have had the courage to do much earlier.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek said Iraq broke off talks with U.N. chief arms inspector Richard Butler because it was frustrated in its efforts to lift the crippling eight-year-old U.N. embargo. He said Iraq also feels that the United States will find it much tougher to threaten or carry out military reprisals. The writer said Iraq does not rule out any consequence if the sanctions continue. But what can a weak country undergoing seven years of sanctions do, Dr. Fanek asked. He said the collapse of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) will not serve Iraq in any way. UNSCOM finished its mission in Iraq three years ago, and destroyed all the weapons of mass destruction Iraq had, said Dr. Fanek. He said the UNSCOM mission is continuing in Iraq for political reasons. If Iraq does not let the UNSCOM in, Washington will have an excuse to continue the sanctions on Iraq, said Dr. Fanek.

Al Dastour's Oreh Rintawi said the new American policy towards Iraq is based on a belief that three mistakes were committed during the February crisis between Iraq and the United Nations. The writer listed the three mistakes as: The hesitation of the Democratic administration to topple President Saddam Hussein, when the U.S. had the chance in 1996 after the Iraqi troops attacked the Kurds in the northern part of the country; granting United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan full authority to make a deal with Iraq thus making the Americans lose any chance to exert pressure on Iraq; and linking the end of the Iraq crisis with the United Nations to Iraq's implementation of U.N. resolutions, and not by calling for the punishment of the Iraqi leadership for committing "war crimes." In the Gulf war, Washington will start a new strategy prompting a call for punishing President Saddam for his war crimes, supporting the Iraqi opposition, and finally launching attacks on Iraq as soon as it violates any brokered agreement, said Rintawi.

View from Academia

Doing without the human touch

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

SOME, INVOKING an argument which came with the birth of modern science three or more centuries ago, express real concern (even dismay) over our increased reliance on technology or machines. In many countries, for example, gas-station attendants have either disappeared or are fast disappearing, due to automated gas-station operations. ATM machines are replacing bank tellers; answering machines are replacing telephone operators. You no longer have to see your travel agent about your travel arrangements; you do not have to go to a shopping-mall to shop. You can do a lot of these things through the phone, e-mail, Internet, etc.

The argument here is that machines, which are unfeeling and not human, are slowly but steadily taking over, depriving us of many valuable human contacts and connections. Some tell you that the people you chat with through Internet or correspond with through e-mail are electronic friends, a poor replacement for those of flesh and blood. Even calling your friends over the phone, no matter how often you do it, is in no way like talking to them face to face. Due to mechanised, automated, and computerised operations of all sorts, we have lost the traditional connections we had with our bakers, milkmen, salesmen, tailors, etc. There may come a time when students lose contact with their teachers and with themselves.

At one level, the argument is true. One derives much pleasure, fun, support and fulfillment from contacts with other fellow human beings. Man is a social and emotional animal. Modern life can be quite isolating, and one directly needs the human touch in so many circumstances. At another level, the argument may not necessarily be true, and one — thanks but no thanks — can do without the human touch.

While some human beings are courteous, nice, fun, helpful and supportive, others are not. While our contact with the former is either convenient, pleasurable or fulfilling, our contact with the latter may be quite disappointing, upsetting and painful.

What happens when you go to one of our gas stations (when you are able to find one, that is)? Most of the time, you find one attendant trying to cater to the needs of 10 motorists at once. He never keeps track of who arrives first, and he is taking forever to attend to you. What is fun or fulfilling about that?

What happens when you call some of our governmental departments? Most often, the operators do not pick up the phone, and when they do, there is nothing psychologically rewarding about talking to them. An answering machine is not only more efficient but it is less upsetting and annoying. What happens when you deal with our bank tellers? Some

of them are courteous and nice. But many are not. They are most often procrastinating and trying their best to look important. What is fun or fulfilling about dealing with them?

We tend to romanticise and idealise matters at times. Even when we used to go to hackers not long ago, what was rewarding about the experience? Most often, we had to deal with a very moody person who was not particularly courteous, who did not seem to have washed his hands, and who dropped cigarette ashes on the loaves he was baking. Not to mention the fact that we had to wait a long time for our turn and hear stories we did not particularly like to hear.

And when our neighbours or friends dropped by instead of calling, not long ago, who says they always came at the most convenient of times, and who says you always enjoyed their company?

Machines have their own problems. When they break down, they annoy us; when they are out of order, they obstruct business. Some computer operations are too slow. Automated switchboards may give you more information that you really need. In many cases, however, machines are not only more efficient and convenient, but also more friendly and less annoying than human beings. At least, they do not have egos to deal with.

Stagnant oil prices fuel U.S. press commentaries

By George S. Hishmeh
 Special to the Jordan Times

WASHINGTON — "In my parent's house," wrote the American Jewish economist, "all events were analysed in terms of a single question: Is it good for the Jews?"

Irwin M. Stelzer, whose credentials fit those of a Zionist propagandist rather than an economist, wrote in the New York Post last month, that were his parents still around "they would undoubtedly conclude that the current low oil prices are good for Israel, and hence for the Jews."

He agreed. His reasoning, in part: "[Oil prices] determine the ability of Middle Eastern countries to finance their ongoing aggression against Israel," explaining that "when prices are high, and Arab treasuries overflowing, Arab nations can afford all of the arms they desire, and have money left over to finance Yasser Arafat's PLO's kleptocracy."

Whatever the future portends the interest in the stagnant oil market has fuelled many a think piece in the American press, the latest mumbo-jumbo forecasting "a strategic shift in the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East that seems to have gone largely unnoticed by the United States."

"This shift in the regional balance of power," according to Mideast consultant Paul Michael

Wibbey, whose article appeared in the Washington Times last week, "is characterised by three major trends that have had a discernable political impact on the region, declining oil prices and revenues, the economic ascendancy of the non-oil producing economies of the Middle East, and the development of a Russian-Middle East alliance system anchored on three rogue states, Iraq, Iran, Syria."

At a recent policy forum at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, James Placke, a former deputy assistant secretary of state and now director for Middle East research at Cambridge Energy Research, underlined that the drop in present in the oil prices will impact the Arab countries in the Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia.

The former State Department official calculated that this year's lower oil prices — \$1.50 less per barrel than in 1996 and possibly an additional \$3.00 less in 1998 — has resulted in a loss of about \$22 billion this year, or a 30 per cent decrease in revenue. He said this was "a very substantial amount (and) the outlook in the short term is negative."

He gave five reasons for the downward spiral in oil rates, listed in their order of ascendancy: Last year's El Nino (warmer) winter, increased Iraqi oil production, "a massively ill-timed" decision of OPEC (the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) to raise pro-

duction, the Asian financial crisis, and the structural change in the oil industry which is bound to have the "longest lasting" effect.

The world is awash in oil and gas, Placke explained, and attributed this development to the new high technologies, which among other things facilitate horizontal drilling. "This means, in practical terms, that the world oil reserves have been multiplied in terms of their (lower-cost) accessibility at prices that are attractive."

In general, he continued, the oil industry is profitable at \$10 a barrel since cost averages \$8 a barrel.

"We do not see oil prices going up in two or three years even if the Asian economies improve," Placke insisted.

Placke saw no short-term fixes for the oil industry and suggested that fundamental economic reform be introduced forthwith, especially in Saudi Arabia where population growth is high, about 3.5 per cent a year.

He pointed out that Qatar, Kuwait and Oman have introduced some reforms but by contrast "Iran has the biggest problems of them all."

According to Placke, the Iranian economy is in "shambles — a more worrisome situation." He said Iranian President Mohammad Khatami's "political prescription" for an economic programme, "to the extent it is visible, does not have the right medicine."

Gregg Easterbrook, the prize-winning reporter who argued in the 1980s that oil supplies were far more plentiful than was then assumed, posits a different view about the future of oil, and advocates an early U.S. commitment to alternative energy forms.

He recently wrote in the Los Angeles Times: "Sometime in the next 20 years or less, global petroleum output may begin a permanent decline, even as world oil demand continues to rise. Though market forces and improved oil-production technology should keep petroleum flowing well into the 21st Century, the peak of the Oil Age may come far earlier than conventional thinking now assumes."

Take the case of China which nowadays is known to import about 800,000 barrels of oil a day. At its current rate of growth, by the year 2015, China will be importing 8 million barrels a day, the same as current U.S. imports. By 2025, China may well import twice as much oil as the U.S. now does.

"If demand continues to expand while reserves decline," Easterbrook continued, "the oil-price equilibrium will rise; eventually, supply will become scarce relative to demand, and a permanent oil-price spiral could begin."

In fact, Craig Hatfield, a professor of geology at the University of Toledo, points out that "the world has burned more oil since the year 1970 than throughout its entire history to that point."

'Convenient dangers' reported by Israeli intelligence

By Peretz Kidron

WEST JERUSALEM — Beyond the close circle surrounding Benjamin Netanyahu, there are few apologists to be found for the policy of garulous inaction whereby he has virtually paralysed the peace process. But their usually thankless task has been made a trifle easier courtesy of two Israeli intelligence agencies whose projections for their respective domains of responsibility were mysteriously leaked to the media within days of each other. Such reports are treated with great respect in Israel, where public opinion still tends to regard the intelligence community as monastic orders united in selfless dedication to the national interest. Scarcely, however, noted that publication of the two reports at this time seemed to be suspiciously convenient for the political ends of the Netanyahu government.

The more wide-ranging survey comes from Aman, the IDF intelligence branch, whose sphere of action focuses mainly on Israel's immediate and more distant neighbours in the Middle East. One portion of the Aman report, as yet incomplete, covers military preparations in the various regional armies. Predictably, there are sections dealing with Iran and Iraq, forecasting that the coming year will see each country taking decisive steps to upgrade its military potential. Aman foresees the approaching end of U.N. supervision of Iraq's armaments programmes, whereupon that country is expected to take two to five years to regain the non-conventional capability it lost in the Gulf war and its aftermath. Aman's experts foresee that Iran too will substantially enhance its strategic potential, with a breakthrough in the manufacture of the Shihab 3 missile whose 1500 kilometres range makes it a direct threat to Israel.

Equally predictable, the report offers an extensive description of Syria's growing strategic capabilities, notably its surface-to-surface missiles which have been employed in deep silos that render them virtually impregnable to air attack. Syria reportedly has also acquired highly accurate anti-tank missiles whose long range — 55 kilometres — far exceeds anything Israel can field. Aman believes the Syrians are making preparations for all eventualities, including a "preemptive" strike by Israel, whether directly from the Golan Heights or by way of Lebanon; escalation of the stand-off in southern Lebanon, with the Syrian units joining Hizbollah in its onslaught on Israel's "security zone"; or a Syrian military initiative including a lightning thrust to seize part or all of the Golan so as to force Israel into negotiations.

In an intriguing innovation, Aman's list of potential external threats also relates to Palestinian military potential. Drawing on its own sources and data provided by the Shabak internal security police — hitherto the specialists on the Palestinians — Aman warns that Palestinian elite units such as Force 17, Arafat's presidential guard, are undergoing training to cover eventualities such as assaults on outlying Israeli settlements. In the event of a "unilateral" Palestinian declaration of statehood in May

1999, another scenario foresees mass confrontations involving Palestinian demonstrators and police in clashes with Israeli troops.

In view of the long-standing hostility between Israel and the three states to its north east, and persistent Israeli-Palestinian tension, it is only to be expected that Aman should find cause to alert the IDF command — and the political echelons — to the military preparations in training in those armies. Less self-evident is the similar tone of warning adopted — 20 years after the Camp David accords — in relation to Egypt. Aman warns that in the event of Egypt joining an anti-Israel coalition, its armed forces have undertaken a process of Westernisation that makes them capable of causing "no end of trouble."

Thus, for example, it is noted that the Egyptian navy is larger, more modern and better equipped than its Israeli counterpart; recent U.S. approval of the sale of Harpoon missiles to Egypt, for installation on that country's F-16 fighters and submarines, would greatly restrict the freedom of action of the Israeli navy, whose own Harpoons are fitted only on small missile boats. Egypt's military capacity also includes local manufacture of the U.S. Abrams tanks, while its air force hopes to supplement its F-16s with the more formidable F-15, similar to the battle planes in service in Israel.

The fact that Aman resorts to such an ominous tone in reference to Egypt — a country with which Israel has been at peace for two decades — reflects the increasingly shrill tone the present government adopts in relation to all its Arab neighbours. Taking their cue from their political masters, Aman's experts revert to the familiar assumption that all Arabs — indeed, all Muslims — are to be regarded as potential enemies, making no allowances for the fact that Israel has formal peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan. This wary view is also evident in the overall strategic assessment in relation to 1999. In a sharp departure from its outlook for the current year, which sets military conflict at a low level of probability, Aman now warns that the probability of war in 1999 is "dramatically higher." Should the current diplomatic impasse persist, Israel's intelligence community warns of a large-scale flare-up with the Palestinians, and possibly Syria too.

Fratricidal strife

While Aman puts Israel's political leadership on notice that its present policy of bogging down the peace process leaves the country vulnerable to a costly and bloody conflict with its neighbours, an internal intelligence report suggests that any change in that policy could trigger violence from a different direction. According to the Shabak domestic security service, revival of the peace process, entailing withdrawal from significant portions of Israel's 1967 conquests, conjures up the spectre of fratricidal strife.

Having failed so dismally to prevent or foresee the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin by a right-wing fanatic, Shabak has learned the les-

son of that humiliating setback by stepping up its surveillance of the religious-nationalist fringe. The Israeli left and academic experts had long warned that the "patriots" of the far right, driven by their overheated messianic zeal for a "Greater Israel," would think nothing of applying force to foil a genuine peace deal entailing "surrender" of any portion of the Promised Land. But Shabak chiefs, pointing to the die-hard protestations of their love for all Jews, refused to believe that they would ever resort to violence against Jewish political adversaries.

Even discovery of the Jewish terrorist "underground" in the early 1980s failed to shake the Shabak doctrine; admitting that the group had launched murderous attacks on various targets within the Palestinian population, self-declared experts conceded that the hardliners would have no scruples about using force against non-Jews but would be precluded by their own religious creed from ever raising a hand against a fellow Jew.

That comforting conviction was abruptly blown away with the three bullets that Yigal Amir pumped into Rabin's back. It was finally demolished as it emerged with growing clarity that Amir enjoyed a standing measure of support or "understanding" from broad circles within the nationalist community, not excluding its more respectable elements. Surveys show tens of thousands of young nationalists who condone Amir's deed: while confined to his high-security cell, the assassin enjoys the attentions of "groupies" — teenage girls from religious schools — who shower him with fan letters expressing various degrees of adoration. While the official right-wing leadership and political parties maintain their stance of disapproval and censure towards Amir, an occasional slip of the tongue by a rabbi or politician forebodes initiatives fit for a paragon.

Whatever becomes of Amir, the public parameters have been set. Former instances of religious violence — such as the grenade attack on a Peace Now procession that killed one demonstrator and injured others — were attributed to lunatics. Amir has established the precedent that "defence of the holy soil of Israel" is adequate vindication for resort to force. There was accordingly little surprise when news leaked out of Shabak warnings that any decision by the present government to hand over additional land to the Palestinians could prompt hardline groups to take up arms. According to the Shabak report, the violence might be directed at police or soldiers ordered to cordon sentries from areas scheduled for hand-over. Alternately, zealots might direct their fire at political opponents from the peace movement, or equally, at nationalist politicians earmarked as renegades for consenting to a withdrawal.

The police and Shabak evidently take such scenarios seriously, their former complacency now giving way to alarmism. Alerted by a tip-off, police recently raided the home of a young para-military leader in northern Israel, to discover large amounts of military equipment stashed away there. In dramatic statements to the media,

police officers claimed to have laid hands on a clandestine organisation engaged in stockpiling arms to resist an eventual withdrawal from the Golan. In view of the absence of any contacts with Syria, and no imminent probability of any surrender of Golan territory, the story seemed rather fishy from the outset. After a day of sensationalist speculation, the story collapsed: it turned out that the soldier hailed from a kibbutz known for its moderate views and support for peace with Syria; moreover, the "arms cache" turned out to be a stash of tents, sleeping-bags and other such equipment that he had stored as a favour to his unit quartermaster.

But while that particular instance turned out to be a false alarm, the reactions of the authorities reflected concern that groups of zealots may already be involved in active preparations to foil progress towards peace. That scenario is probably accurate, and it is only proper that it should prompt anxiety in high places. In fact, however, the official attitude seems somewhat ambiguous, with subliminal signs of gratification. It almost seems as though portions of the Israeli establishment are interested in pumping out the notion that concessions to the Palestinians are liable to exact a heavy price in undermining Israeli democracy, perhaps even endangering the existence of Israel as a viable state.

Some observers suspect that the almost simultaneous leaking of the two intelligence reports was a calculated demarche ordered at the highest levels of government. It would indeed further Netanyahu's ends by allowing him to depict himself as labouring under extreme and contradictory constraints that leave him almost no freedom of action. If we are to believe the experts of the two intelligence agencies, Netanyahu is sure to trigger violence whichever course he follows. If he fails to offer the concessions necessary to reach agreement with the Palestinians, he runs the risk of plunging the country into an armed confrontation with its neighbours. But if he does offer those concessions, he risks fratricidal strife.

Backed by the considered opinions of intelligence experts who enjoy high regard in Israel and elsewhere, Netanyahu is now free to brandish the two apparently conflicting reports, raising his eyes to heaven and declaring himself helpless to adopt either of the two disastrous courses. He can refer to the Aman report in his arguments with the more outspoken hardliners in his government; when the latter advise him to break off talks with the Palestinians, he is sure to ask them whether they are prepared to take responsibility for the bloody cost of an all-out confrontation with the Arab World. At the same time, the Shabak report will give him the cue for rhetorical questions to the Clinton administration: in their crass disregard for Israel's most fundamental interests, are the Americans prepared to exert pressure for concessions that threaten to plunge the country into civil war? It is a line of argument that should go over well in Congress.

— Middle East International

Features
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 distances

By Jean-Claude Elias
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Abolishing distances

By Jean-Claude Elias

ONE DAY maybe the networks woven by information technology will be credited for bringing people closer and for achieving peace on earth. If this sounds too utopian to you think again.

Despite some of its negative aspects, the Internet is doing wonders by allowing people to communicate like they have never before. In addition to the very interesting possibility one has to exchange text, speech, images and sound over the Web, one single aspect of it makes it truly different from all other means of communication — ubiquity.

When you send a fax to someone or call them on a regular phone line, you automatically know where the machine you are "talking" to is. The number you are dialling is attached to a house, an office, a place with a fixed address, a physical presence. When you communicate via e-mail or over the Internet, you don't necessarily know where your correspondent is. The Web site you are contacting or the e-mail address you are using could be anywhere in the world. In one way it is like calling a cellular phone number — you are not sure where your correspondent is, unless you ask him or her.

chip talk

By removing distances these techniques are changing the way we think. You e-mail somebody without even thinking of the location he is in. But you know that somehow your message will reach him. The physical address becomes irrelevant. Suddenly what matters is the person and not the place. If your friend Leila has an e-mail subscription with an ISP (Internet Service Provider) based in Jordan, with an electronic address like leila@zoom.com.jo for instance, you know that Leila can check her e-mail at the same electronic address but while she's in Singapore or Buenos Aires. All she needs is a computer fitted with a modem and a telephone line. For that matter, and if Leila is wealthy enough to own one of these new cellular phones with Internet capability, she wouldn't even need a physical telephone line and could be reading her e-mail perched on a tree, in the middle of the Amazon jungle.

Cellular phones and the Internet are making people more important than places. If technology continues at the same pace, borders between countries will become virtually useless with time. How long before we're there?

Afghan women under 'house arrest' — rights group

By Raja Asghar
Reuters

ISLAMABAD — A U.S.-based human rights group on Wednesday accused Afghanistan's Taliban Islamic movement of targeting women for extreme repression and forcing them into virtual "house arrest."

"The extent to which the Taliban regime has threatened the freedoms and needs of Afghan women is unparalleled in recent history," a report by the Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) group said. "Taliban policies of systematic discrimination against women seriously undermine the health and well-being of Afghan women. Such discrimination and the suffering it causes constitute an affront to the dignity and worth of Afghan women, and humanity as a whole."

A copy of the report, titled "The Taliban's War on Women: A Health and Human Rights Crisis in Afghanistan" and due for release on Wednesday, was received by Reuters in Islamabad. The report documents results of what the group said was a three-month study of women's health and human rights concerns and conditions in Afghanistan, where the Taliban

controls more than two-thirds of territory and has made spectacular gains against a northern-based opposition alliance over the past week.

"The Taliban is the first faction laying claim to power in Afghanistan which has targeted women for extreme repression and punished them brutally for infractions," the PHR said. "To our knowledge, no other regime in the world has methodically and violently forced half of its population into virtual house arrest, prohibiting them on pain of physical punishment from showing their faces, seeking medical care without a male escort, or attending school." It described the Taliban, which emerged in November 1994 as a military and political force led by Muslim religious students, as a group of "poorly educated rural Pashtun youths mostly recruited from refugee camps and religious schools in neighbouring Pakistan." The name Taliban translates roughly as "religious students" and many of the group's leaders and fighters are drawn from Afghanistan's Pashtun ethnic group.

"With no functioning judicial system, many municipal and provincial authorities use the

Taliban's interpretation of Sharia (Islamic law) and traditional tribal codes of justice," a summary of the report said.

After taking control of the capital Kabul in September 1996, the Taliban issued edicts forbidding women from working outside the home, attending school, or leaving their homes unless accompanied by a husband, father, brother or son, it said. "In public, women must be covered from head to toe in a burqa, a head-to-toe cloth covering with only a mesh opening to see and breathe through. Women are not permitted to wear white (the colour of the Taliban flag) socks or white shoes, or shoes that make noise while women are walking. Also, houses and buildings in public view must have their windows painted over if females are present in the household."

The Taliban has vowed to create the world's purest Islamic state, but its interpretation of Islamic law is disputed by many moderate Islamic scholars.

In its recommendations, the PHR urged Taliban authorities to commit themselves to take "all measures necessary to stop the practice of systematic discrimination against women's human

rights" and asked the international community not to accept any justification for such violations.

"The international community should also consider ways in which those responsible for the vast degradation of women and girls in Afghanistan might be held accountable before the world for these human rights violations," it said.

It also called for re-evaluation of aid distribution procedures by humanitarian programmes to ensure that those most in need are not discriminated against and for official U.N. recognition of Afghan women seeking refuge as refugees.

Aid organisations working in Afghanistan have complained that their access to female aid recipients has been severely curtailed by the Taliban's rulings.

The PHR called for a moratorium on foreign corporate investment in Afghanistan that it said would help the Taliban and urged the United States to oppose Taliban's claim to Afghanistan's U.N. seat, which is still held by the administration of ousted president Burhanuddin Rabbani.

That summer

Baghdad 1989

The calm before the Desert Storm

Muthena Paul Alkazraji visited Baghdad before the Gulf war and found a thriving city heavy on politics

MY ENTRY into Iraqi airspace in the summer of 1989 began with an indignity in an airborne convenience.

At 40,000 feet above the mountains of Kurdistan, as I occupied a WC on an Iraqi Airways 747, a fellow passenger tried to force an entry. It was an understandable error: The door's lock was broken and I had been holding it with my feet. He pushed, and I pushed back.

He then pushed back harder. I held off the assault for about 30 seconds until I snarled: "Do you mind?" He barked something back in Arabic and retreated.

I was flying to Baghdad during a brief respite in Iraq's perennial tribulations to visit my father. The war with Iran was over; the allies had not yet assembled their military hardware among the bedouin sands for the liberation of Kuwait. Nor had much of Iraq's infrastructure been shelled to rubble.

As we stepped off the plane at Baghdad the heat

pushed us in the face like a hot air vent on maximum. We were pushed to the terminal building beneath large neon lettering that spelt out unambiguously: Saddam International Airport.

We filed past strict security personnel wearing raincoats, sunglasses and casually tonguing government-issue toothpicks, before entering baggage reclaim. It was here that two men I had never met before greeted me like the returning prodigal son, embracing and kissing me on each cheek. I took it as the customary Arabic greeting.

My father greeted me too, a little less demonstratively. (That evening when I was introduced at a dinner party, I heartily embraced the first person presented. "No," he scoffed stiffly. "Too familiar." I sheepishly shook the remaining guests' hands.)

Outside the airport we climbed into a Chevrolet and the two men, who turned out to be ingratiating junior employees at my father's office, drove us swiftly into the heart of the city. I sat in the back like a diplomat.

I stayed with my father for the next four weeks, in a suburb close to the city's football stadium. When I was killing time at his house, an entertainment highlight would be the regular broadcasts of Iraqi TV news. The theme music built up to a dramatic intensity fit for any Hitchcock climax, but the domestic coverage that followed was little more than scenes of government officials wandering serenely around hotel foyers to the strains of Vivaldi.

When my father was not tied to his desk, we drove around Baghdad in air-con-

ditioned comfort, visiting the city's sites and souks. He bought me a pair of "proper trousers" (brown acrylic, with a crease down the front). "Do you want me to grow a moustache like Freddy Mercury's?" Then I will be a complete Arab," I said. We stopped at open-air restaurants for chick-peas, shish kebabs and Shahrzad beers, and dropped in on relatives and friends who fed us with okra and rice, wedges of watermelon and tiny glasses of sweet tea. His friends were invariably delighted to meet someone from England; so many of them had studied in the U.K.

We drove past the ugly Unknown Soldier's Monument in Zawiya Park, with its two giant arms clasping sabres to form an arch. Helms of Iranian soldiers had been tastefully hung at the

base.

We visited the towering split dome of the Martyr's Monument; my father had been personnel manager for Brazilian labour brought in to build it. His days working there had, he said, been good times. On one occasion he had mistakenly driven up a road towards a presidential compound. Worse, his old van had backfired, alarming and severely irritating the Republican Guard. He was imprisoned for 14 days for this. To relieve his boredom, the Brazilians performed samba music below his cell windows.

On another occasion some Brazilians had decided it would be amusing to draw a giant pair of spectacles on a public painting of Saddam Hussein. They were all thrown in jail, and my father managed to return "their

favour by securing their release.

We also cruised past the intriguing Ali Baba's Monument, where a statue of Murrana pours boiling oil on to the heads of the 40 thieves hiding in pots below. I spent a further day immersed in the Assyrian and Babylonian archaeology at the Iraq Museum, and we browsed around the copper and carpet merchants off Rashid Street. Baghdad was buzzing and prospering. At many sites I caused my father anguish by taking photographs too close to government buildings, or with soldiers in the frame (easily done in Baghdad). More than once he pulled over for a shot of gin to calm his nerves.

One evening we ate by the banks of the Tigris at a fish restaurant on Abu Nuas street. Here the fat Mazgouf fish were kept in tanks and pegged out around tamarisk wood fires to grill. Here, with the palm trees rustling, my father dozed and broke

wind like a satisfied caliph.

In the bar of the Al-Rashid hotel — where the Western media set up camp two years later during the Gulf conflict, and from where CNN beamed out pictures of missiles steering their ominous course over the suburbs — we got chatting to a group of English businessmen.

"At the time I guessed they might be a party of refrigerator salesmen from Wetherby; history now offers a few alternatives. "Did you know," I proclaimed boldly, "that Amnesty International has documented grave human rights violations here?" It was a bit of a conversation-stopper; panic flashed across my father's face. Back at the car I was severely ticked off.

My final week in Baghdad was none too relaxing. Between the airline office and home my ticket vanished, and they would not reissue me with another booking until four days after my visa expired. This meant

getting a visa extension. Everyday we would return to the immigration office on Sa'doun street to collect my passport, and the officials would grin and tell us to come back next day. My father told me not to look so stressed; it might make them suspicious. This made me more stressed, and aroused their suspicions. They handed the passport over eventually, and I flew home.

My father remained in Baghdad throughout the allied air raids in January and February 1991. He told me later how he sat on the roof of a bomb-shelter and watched anti-aircraft guns rake the sky like fireworks. There, at least, he figured he could see when a missile was heading towards him.

I have not been back to Baghdad since, but if economic sanctions are ever lifted, I hope to.

— The Independent

Observers say government failed its mandate

(Continued from page 1)

This week, a New York-based committee said the draft press and publications law constitutes "a grave threat" to press freedoms in Jordan.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said in a letter to parliamentarians that the amended draft law would still grant authorities "sweeping powers to censor, fine and suspend newspapers found in violation of a variety of vaguely-worded prohibitions."

"On the democratic front this government embodies the pre-1989 spirit," said Dr. Hamarneh. The King's illness may have prolonged the tenure of the Majali government. But with the return of King Hussein from treatment at the Mayo Clinic in the United States, analysts expect either a reshuffle or change of the government.

Speculation as to whom the King might choose to succeed Dr. Majali intensified over the last two weeks, with some pundits

suggesting Prince Zeid Bin Shaker, former Prime Ministers Zeid Rifai and Mudar Badran as possible choices. Some less traditional personalities, including Royal Court Chief Fayed Tarawneh, and former Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, have also been suggested.

But most candidates for the top government post, particularly Senate Speaker Rifai, who is one of the most-talked-about candidates, have public service records that make them politically difficult choices. Both Mr. Rifai and Mr. Badran are associated with the economic crisis that broke out in the late eighties and are considered difficult options in view of the current economic crisis. The government meanwhile seems to be unmoved by the mounting criticism. Asked if the government was thinking of resigning, a senior Cabinet minister this week told the Jordan Times that he thought "a change of government is premature" at this stage.

Iraq freezes cooperation with UNSCOM inspectors

(Continued from page 1)

— The Security Council must "legally, politically and practically adhere" to conditions that will respect Iraq's sovereignty and legitimate rights, including the no-fly zones that U.S. and its allies set up after the Gulf war in the north and the south.

— Iraq will reserve the right to "expel workers in the U.N. monitoring activities who violate these legitimate conditions."

President Hussein's stunning decision came only hours after the move was unanimously recommended by his rubber-stamp parliament, the 250-member National Assembly, in a six-hour debate. The confrontation follows Iraq's demand this week that UNSCOM immediately certify that the country is free of weapons of mass destruction, a crucial step before the U.N. Security Council can lift the sanctions.

Chief weapons inspector Richard Butler refused to give that certification during his talks Monday with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, who immediately ended further talks.

Mr. Butler left Baghdad Tuesday for New York where he is scheduled to brief the Security Council on Thursday on the deadlock.

Arriving in New York Wednesday, Butler said he had told Mr. Aziz the inspectors were almost ready to certify that Iraq has destroyed its missiles

and chemical weapons.

He added though that inspectors needed more time to investigate biological weapons.

"We were getting there. If this were a five-lap race, we were halfway into the fifth lap. Why stop now when you are getting toward the finish line?" he said.

Speaking before President Hussein's announcement, Mr. Butler warned that if Iraq decides to break "cooperation with us and make a run for it on their own, that is very serious. And the Security Council will have to deal with that."

Mr. Butler is scheduled to meet with U.N. chief Kofi Annan later Wednesday. During the last crisis earlier this year — triggered by Iraq's refusal to allow inspectors into presidential palaces — U.S. and British forces rushed to the Gulf and were poised to attack Iraq. Mr. Annan's personal mediation averted the crisis — and a war.

In Iraq, the official line is that the U.N. inspectors are American stooges.

Foreign Minister Sahhaf accused the inspectors of creating the crisis by provoking Iraq. The inspectors "are cops of the dirty American type," he said.

"This is enough. Iraq cannot continue with this play," Oil Minister Amer Mohammed Rashid told reporters during a break in the Parliament debate.

U.S. aid official calls for broader relief intervention

(Continued from page 12)

lives and urged relief workers to explore other long-term ways of stemming the crisis.

"The sixty-plus persons who died today in Wau didn't die for lack of food now. Their deaths began some time ago when their society collapsed and the normal means of survival were exhausted as a consequence of this interminable war," Mr. Williams said.

The famine in south Sudan has been compounded by the 15-year-old civil war between the largely animist and Christian southerners and the Arabised, Islamic junta in Khartoum.

Meanwhile, the World Food Programme (WFP) said thunderstorms were slowing down the relief effort in southern Sudan.

The WFP cancelled or re-routed a third of its flights into the area Wednesday due to poor visibility or flooded airstrips at delivery points, WFP spokeswoman Michele Quinaglie, told AFP by telephone from Lokichokio in northern Kenya.

Most of the affected flights were

intended to move staff into new food distribution locations, she added.

The U.N. food agency operates about 30 flights to southern Sudan every day, transporting up to 450 tonnes of food to distribution points.

"If we continue to face these weather problems, we will have to start cancelling some of the flights that are air-dropping large food supplies. We need staff on the ground to receive those flights," said Ms. Quinaglie.

She said three teams of WFP staff were stranded in distribution locations in southern Sudan because planes were unable to go and pick them up due to the bad weather.

The airstrip in Ajiep, where some of the most vulnerable famine victims are, was "completely unlandable," she added. "Our biggest obstacle now is the weather."

U.N. mediation offer on Sudan welcomed, but talks progress slow

(Continued from page 12)

SPLA spokesman Pagan Amum told reporters: "If the offer is really serious, the SPLA is inviting the secretary general to mediate."

But Mr. Amum added that the rebels regretted that Mr. Amman had made the offer publicly, rather than transmit-

ing it directly to the conference.

David de Chand, a former rebel who is now the Sudanese foreign ministry's director of political affairs, peace and human rights, told AFP the government side was "elated and delighted" by Mr. Amman's offer, but said any mediation by the U.N. chief

would have to come in the framework of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which is hosting these talks.

IGAD is made up of Sudan, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda and Kenya, which chairs the Sudan committee.

The civil war pitting the largely black, animist and

Christian south against the Arabised, Islamic north is estimated to have caused more than a million deaths since 1983, and aid workers say the current famine threatens more than 2.5 million people, mostly in the south.

Conference sources said the SPLA presented its peace plan Wednesday morning, but then

withdrew it, apparently after deciding to amend it.

Mr. Godana, asked at the lunch-break how the talks were going, replied tersely: "They're going."

At the last round of talks, in Nairobi in early May, the two sides agreed to hold a referendum on "unity or outright secession" for the south.

But they set no date for that poll, or details of how the south would be governed in the meantime. They also failed to agree on the area it would cover, and reached no accord on the separation of state and religion.

The first stumbling block here is the geographical delimitation of the south, with

the rebels insisting it include the central Nuba mountains, as well as other regions the government considers an integral part of the north, the sources said.

At Tuesday's opening ceremony, Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Secretary-General Salim Ahmad Salim called for an urgent solution to

the "senseless and indefensible" war.

"Absolutely nothing can justify a continuation of this conflict," he said.

"The conflict in southern Sudan has gone on far too long. It is clear [it] calls for an urgent solution. We must speak out and act more forcefully."

Israel points to brightening picture for Palestinian workers

11.99	4921.35	0.9401
-	410.57	0.9317
2.4356	-	2.2692
1.0733	440.68	-

GBP	CHF	JPY
0.18257	0.39486	38.064
0.16599	0.40327	38.7943
1.98965	4.83235	465.118


Israel, Romania sign trade accords

ENDALT

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QUEETA

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WHAT THE SINGER DID DURING HIS DAILY WORKOUT:

Now arrange the coded letters to form the **surprise** answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: HE

10

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

ACI chief describes private sector representation in official delegations as 'cosmetic'

** KHALDOUN ABU HASSAN, the president of the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) told the Economic and Financial Committee of the Lower House recently, that the representation of the private sector in any joint council or committee with the government is only a cosmetic, superficial and a formality representation, at a time when the government highlights the important role of the private sector in the economy.

He said there is a lack of trust between the private and public sectors and that "changing moods" has reflected (badly) on the economy. "As a result, Jordan has gradually begun to lose the Iraqi market which is a main outlet," Mr. Abu Hassan added. He continued to say that the Kingdom could not even benefit from the Palestinian market, within the framework of the peace process, "because Israel would not relinquish the Palestinian market for Jordanian interest," Mr. Abu Hassan even accused the economic ministerial team of being isolated from the interests of the public.

Mr. Abu Hassan criticised the government for pursuing international agreements out of political priorities without an institutional preparedness and without sufficient studies. He said that we do not have the readiness, the specialised departments and the experts to negotiate and enter into international accords. "What we often see are only a series of communiques and media campaigns," he charged.

The ACI president was bitter to indi-

cate that the role of the private sector in official delegations is only a cosmetic role and that agreements are signed without giving any consideration to the interests of private sector and, consequently, the implementation of such accords do not get fulfilled.

He accused the government of excluding the ACI from various committees one of which was a consultative council for the minister of industry and trade. He also pointed to the high interest rates charged on credit and described them as a main hindrance to investment. "The Industrial Development Bank which was set up to support the industry charges 11 per cent interest and one per cent commission on industrial loans despite enjoying subsidised funding from international organisations and funds," he explained noting that such a rate affects investments and raises costs.

Mr. Abu Hassan concluded by referring to the large indebtedness of major industrial companies and pointing out that such a burden affects the operations and productivity of such firms like the phosphate and the petroleum refinery companies. He emphasised that Jordanian exports did not show any real growth as a result of the situation of the industrial sector and the economy in general (Al Dustur).

Conference attracts 500 investors, businessmen

AMMAN (Petra) — More than 500 Jordanian businessmen and investors will take part in a four-day conference which will be held here from Sept. 7 to Sept. 11 under the Royal patronage, according to head of the higher preparatory committee in charge of preparations for the conference.

In a statement to Jordan News Agency, Petra, Hamdi Tabha'a, president of Jordan Businessmen Association (JBA) said representatives of the various economic sectors will indulge over a period of three days in a national debate on economic and development issues.

Participants will present ideas and proposals for establishing small and medium-size projects designed to attract investments.

Mr. Tabha'a said 20 experts from the public and private sectors will present 20 working papers to enrich the conference's deliberations and discussion, and to propose ideas on how to face challenges and suggest solutions.

Mr. Tabha'a lauded the efforts made by the Jordanian ambassadors abroad, saying that they have contributed to establishing and strengthening the link between the JBA and the Jordanian expatriates.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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FURNISHED MARKET INDEX PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 05/06/1998

FAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	OTV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
6	355.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	17.8	0.92	20	500	108750	218.00	217.50	-0.50
	2.100	1.620	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	4	2500	4125	1.65	1.65	-
5	3.230	1.130	BANK OF JORDAN	5	0.00	3	7650	8645	1.13	1.13	-
	1.300	0.770	KLD. EAST INV. BK.	68.2	0.00	1	500	520	1.04	1.04	-
2	2.680	1.850	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	10.9	6.65	3	2327	3629	1.56	1.56	-
5	6.510	2.610	THE MORTGAGE BK.	19.5	2.26	22	20850	64187	3.07	3.07	-
5	4.190	2.240	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	43.3	2.35	1	230	633	2.24	2.13	-0.11
8	4.000	1.090	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.4	0.00	9	1630	2778	1.72	1.70	-0.02
3	3.600	1.350	JOR. INV. FILM. BANK	23.8	3.23	2	1250	1638	1.55	1.55	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 286.60 %CHG: -0.16											
2	2.850	1.620	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.5	9.26	1	950	2565	2.71	2.70	-0.01
2	2.350	1.800	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	5.2	0.00	2	722	1526	1.94	1.93	-0.01
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 129.50 %CHG: -0.10											
					3	1742	4091				
3	2.940	1.470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.0	5.36	12	7728	11916	1.55	1.54	-0.01
	1.950	220	JORDAN SWEL. TRAD.	9	0.00	2	1000	331	34	33	-0.01
4	4.500	1.850	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	6.7	2.05	6	2750	5262	1.83	1.85	0.02
1	1.070	890	ZAKA EDUCATION	21.4	0.00	9	5970	5689	0.92	0.92	-
1	1.030	1.280	UNIFIED CO.	5.7	8.53	6	1500	1907	1.28	1.29	0.01
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 111.14 %CHG: +0.14											
					39	19028	25267				
4	4.000	1.840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.4	5.70	17	5738	11139	1.92	1.93	0.01
4	4.110	1.750	JOR. PETROBRAS MINES	17.9	0.00	2	950	1611	1.75	1.69	-0.06
11	11.250	6.870	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.4	8.31	10	2950	31551	10.75	10.70	-0.05
5	5.950	4.450	JORDAN TANNING	7.4	8.70	1	250	1150	4.60	4.60	-
1	1.570	1.000	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	11.7	6.80	2	1150	1157	1.03	1.05	0.02
1	1.820	1.060	INDUSTRIAL COM. AGR.	65.6	0.00	1	100	111	1.14	1.11	-0.02
7	7.250	5.900	JOR. WOODS MILL	8.0	2.22	4	500	2050	6.20	6.10	-0.10
5	5.740	2.400	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	7.6	2.74	63	54665	143382	2.70	2.74	0.04
15	5.000	1.350	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	5.7	7.63	8	1050	1378	1.38	1.31	-0.07
2	2.640	2.450	JORDAN DAIRY	6.1	10.10	2	200	550	2.75	2.75	-
1	1.440	1.020	JOR. PIPES MANUFACT.	9.2	9.01	2	6150	6827	1.10	1.11	0.01
2	2.890	1.750	JOR. PAPER CARBON.	11.4	0.00	8	2087	4022	1.93	2.02	0.09
8	8.540	5.300	ARAB CEMENT. DISTRIB.	7.6	7.04	4	750	5254	7.14	7.10	-0.04
6	6.350	4.700	DAR ALDUMA PV. INV.	6.6	6.42	4	500	2720	5.41	5.44	0.03
1	1.570	1.400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	14.5	0.00	12	6200	3956	4.43	4.43	-
3	3.690	1.880	GENERAL INVESTMENT	17.0	2.69	6	5982	22021	3.68	3.72	0.04
1	620	440	NATIONAL INDUS.	9	0.00	1	1000	440	44	44	-
1	560	370	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	4	5000	1600	39	38	-0.01
1	1.760	880	UNIV. CHEM. INDUS.	8.7	9.41	1	200	170	86	85	-0.01
5	2.330	780	WASH. CARPET WILKES	28.9	0.00	7	3250	2723	84	83	-0.01
1	730	510	JOR. SULPHUR CHEM.	9.7	0.00	9	9450	4820	51	51	-
1	1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	14.5	4.58	27	12462	16174	1.29	1.31	0.02
1	1.360	740	KAWHER INVEST.	9	0.00	14	7500	3342	42	45	0.02
15	1.300	740	UNIV. MODN. INDUS.	11.6	8.22	10	10500	7665	74	73	-0.01
1	1.060	500	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	9	0.00	7	4550	2503	56	55	-0.01
1	1.660	1,000	WATL. CO. - ALKALINE	8.5	9.26	2	670	721	1.22	1.21	-0.01
4	1.080	740	JOR. NEW GAME CO.	13.0	0.00	22	11300	11324	1.74	1.72	-0.01
1	1.510	1,150	EL - SAY READY WEAR	41.2	0.00	3	11150	12946	1.17	1.17	-
1	1.310	990	INTL. TOBACCO	6.9	5.89	2	250	247	99	99	-
1	860	660	JORDAN STEEL	8.14	8.14	15	18230	15677	86	86	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 88.22 %CHG: -0.26											
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 175.63 %CHG: -0.20											
FURNISHED MARKET INDEX PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 05/06/1998											
1	430	270	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	2	15000	6750	42	45	0.02
1	500	240	JOR. GRADE FAC.	9	0.00	1	500	220	44	44	-
1	800	510	UNION INT.	9	0.00	2	300	156	51	52	0.01
1	620	280	ARAB FIRM. INVEST.	9	0.00	3	6750	1958	29	29	-
1	1,010	760	AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	2	0.00	2	20000	20000	1.00	1.00	-
1	2,220	1,250	CENTRAL INV. GROUP	9	0.00	2	3500	4410	1.26	1.26	-
1	1,000	850	ARAB JOR. INVEST. CO.	13.8	6.17	1	250	203	85	81	-0.04

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You are in a good position to see what needs to be done next. Some of the others may not be. People in positions to make decisions don't know what they're talking about because they're not talking to each other. If possible, allow them to talk through you. If you don't do something, nothing will get done.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) The moon is in Capricorn and will go into Aquarius today. You should notice the difference when it happens because things will slow down. An authority figure will want more attention. You won't have as much freedom as you had otherwise. Don't fret. It's a temporary condition.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Education is the theme, learning as well as teaching. You'll be doing both for the next few days. Just race back and forth between the two camps. Learn as much as you can and then teach it wherever it's needed. You're the link between people who know and people who need to know. It's a job you do well.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) You've been more outspoken than usual all week, and that's good. Today, let people know you need the money they owe you as soon as possible. A gentle reminder is nice, but don't put up with any more excuses. The money should come in your direction naturally anyway, but it wouldn't hurt to give it a push.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Looks like you're dealing with some persnickety characters who want to make sure everything is done perfectly. You like to move quickly, sometimes overlooking things they think are important. It's like you're the builder and they're the building inspectors. Better to join forces instead of arguing with one another.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Another intense workday, even less fun than yesterday. Why does this keep happening to you? It's the way the planets are arranged right now. It doesn't have anything to do with you. It's happening to all the Virgos, if that makes you feel any better. Now, get back to work.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Today is a lot more comfortable. You should be able to do almost everything on your list. You are supported by good friends and loved ones' encouragement. You'll go a lot further than you thought. Be careful, though, the situation will not turn out the way you planned.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The sun is in Leo and the moon is going into Aquarius. Leo and Aquarius tend to lock horns with one another. Even worse, they want to do things you frequently disagree with. If you notice two influential people making decisions today that don't take your point of view into account, don't just sit there. Holler!

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You're always intelligent, but today you're also in the mood to study. Take full advantage of it and study something that will help you become fabulously successful. It looks like a good job opportunity is in your future, especially if you learn the skills you'll need and perform as brilliantly as you know you can.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) There's pressure on you financially. The challenge is to figure out how to invest so you'll make more money later. Start by paying your bills, so you don't have to pay the interest rate. If you can't figure out how, get a partner to help.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) The good news is the moon is in your sign, giving you increased enthusiasm and imagination. You are a very creative person anyway, but for the next few days you'll be coming up with all sorts of fabulous ideas. The bad news is that you may need one quickly, because you could find yourself in a bind.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) The moon going from Capricorn into Aquarius today, an unpleasant development. It's a lot more fun for you when the moon is in Capricorn. It means there are parties, festivities, everyone wanting to go out to lunch together, stuff like that. When the moon goes into Aquarius, you may discover a pile of paperwork that has to be done.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

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World Basketball Championships Italy, Argentina grab late tickets to quarter-finals

ATHENS (AFP) — Italy did not pass up the chance of a place in the quarter-finals of the basketball world championships by defeating Puerto Rico 68-63 in their crunch encounter here Tuesday evening.

Argentina also gate crashed the party thanks to their 86-76 win over Brazil and Australia's defeat at the hands of the United States.

The Italians were ably assisted by Gregor Fucks, with 15 points and his assured touch in key moments.

But it was no cake walk for Italy as the Puerto Ricans were spurred on by an exceptional Ortiz and they managed to contain Carlton Myers, who only scored 8 points, but their collective game left something to be desired.

Argentina's success was long in the making. Dominating on the rebound and clearly superior in the centre they did however lose a good number of baskets.

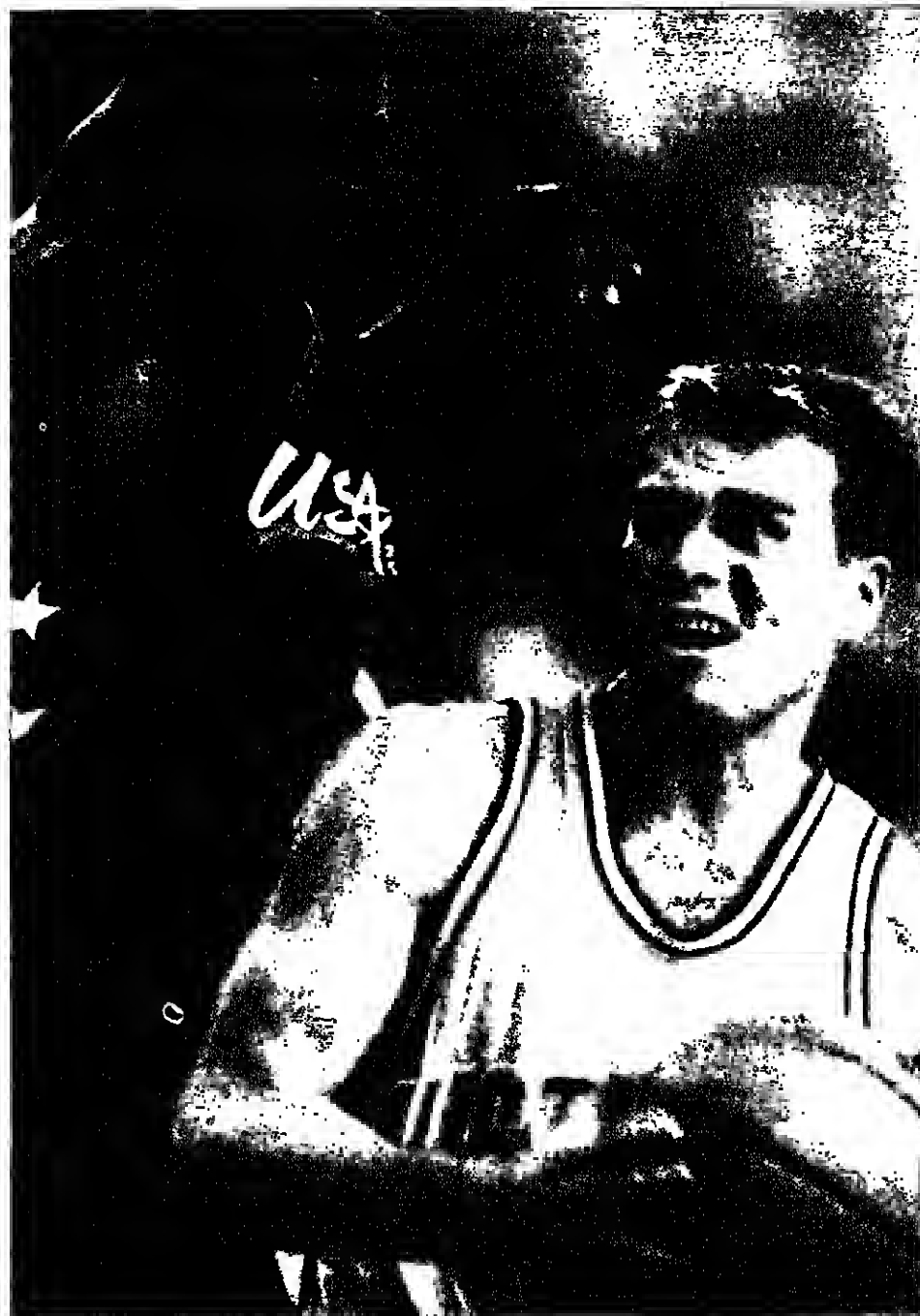
Their quarter-final place was made certain with the United States' comfortable 96-78 verdict over Australia, who have not enjoyed the best of championships and are now resigned to the 9th and 12th place playoffs.

Lithuania failed in their bid to head Group F when going down 80-86 to Spain. With only one defeat to their name Spain continued to surprise, with Alberto Herreros the architect of this latest victory notching 27 points. They also edged Lithuania on rebounds.

With 24 seconds from the end Lithuania led by two points, but Alfonso Reyes got Spain level and they wrapped up the issue in extra time.

Russia put up a lackadaisical performance against a spirited Canadian side already condemned to the 9th-12th place playoffs. Polished winners against Greece Monday the Russians, slow and lacking in imagination, were leading 42-38 at the break and then had to wait till the last three minutes to seal the match 81-72.

Russia's star scorer Vassili Karashev saved their blushes with 21 points but their rivals could have sprung a surprise if they had not squandered so many chances.



Australia's guard Shane Heal (R) prepares to score as Jason Sasser of the U.S. defends during their second round match of the World Basketball Championship in the Peace and Friendship in Piraeus Stadium (Reuters photo)

STANDINGS

Group E					15th Place				
Team	W	L	PF	PA	Senegal	75	S. Korea	72	
q-Yugoslavia	5	1	486	366	12				
q-Russia	5	1	455	388	12				
q-Italy	4	2	395	393	10				
q-Greece	4	2	385	379	10				
Puerto Rico	2	4	438	443	8				
Canada	1	5	419	484	7				
Group F					13th Place				
Team	W	L	PF	PA	Nigeria	70	Japan	60	
q-United States	5	1	511	430	11				
q-Spain	5	1	457	429	11				
q-Lithuania	4	2	472	432	10				
q-Argentina	3	3	436	428	9				
Australia	3	3	432	427	9				
Brazil	1	5	399	456	7				

Friday, Aug. 7
Quarterfinals
Match 5
Yugoslavia vs. Argentina, 1215
Match 6
Greece vs. Spain, 1430
Match 7
Russia vs. Lithuania, 1645
Match 8
Italy vs. United States, 1900
Consolation Round
Match 3
Puerto Rico vs. Brazil, 0800
Match 4
Canada vs. Australia, 1000

Rush signs for Wrexham

WREXHAM (AFP) — Former Liverpool idol Ian Rush signed a one-year deal to become player-coach at English second division outfit Wrexham on Wednesday.

The 37-year-old striker moves to the north Welsh club after a nomadic season which included spells at Leeds United, Newcastle and Sheffield United.

The veteran Welsh international said it was the first step towards a career in soccer management. "It is something I have always wanted to do," he said.

"Money was not important, I had offers from Japan and Europe but I like the set-up at Wrexham and I can learn the coaching trade." He is expected to make his debut in Saturday's Second Division clash at home to Reading.

Japan to form a young team for Asian Games

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan will send a young team in the Asian Games in December to prepare for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

"We are going to form a team mainly with players who will be under 23 at the Sydney Olympics. They should be under 21 now, but we are going to add some more older players too," said Japanese Football Association official Hiroshi Onozawa.

The announcement will be welcomed by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) which is battling with the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) over eligibility for the Bangkok Games. "The Olympics is limited to under-23 players, but there is no limit for the Asian Games, though the AFC wants an Under-23 rule. Japan, bronze medalists at the 1968 Mexico Olympics in 1968, but only qualified again in Atlanta in 1996.

"It is possible that a new coach of the Japanese national team will also lead the team for the Asian Games," JFA vice president Kunishige Kamamoto was quoted by Jiji Press as saying.

Japan has yet to name the new national coach to replace Takeshi Okada who resigned after Japan lost three matches in their preliminary group at the World Cup finals in France.

O'Brien drops Kuerten in du Maurier

TORONTO (AP) — Alex O'Brien, who qualified for the main draw when Thomas Enqvist withdrew, upset Gustavo Kuerten 6-3, 7-6 (7-2) Tuesday in the \$2.4 million du Maurier Open.

O'Brien had to retire during qualifying Sunday because of cramps. But when Enqvist, the No. 12 seed pulled out, O'Brien made the field as the top-ranked qualifying loser.

"I was so nervous (in qualifying) that I couldn't hit a ball on the court," O'Brien said. "I guess I have some mental troubles, my mind is not too clear."

"But I had an extra day and all I did was relax and sleep in late, and that seemed to help."

Against Kuerten, the No. 12 seed and 1997 French Open champion, O'Brien showed a strong serve-and-volley game.

"I was thinking I was going to be on TV, I could

go out there and make a complete ass of myself and lose 6-0, 6-0."

O'Brien said. "But maybe that helped me relax a little because when you think about the worst thing that could happen to you, really, the bottom line is it's not that bad."

In 1997, O'Brien rose to No. 30 in the ATP rankings, a jump of 172 spots. He has since slid to No. 147.

"The greatest feeling for a tennis player is to win," he said. "The mind is 95 per cent of this game and if I can keep it clear and focused then I can win some matches."

Kuerten's head was never in the game.

"I've played too many tournaments," he said. "I wasn't too motivated to play and I'm a little bit tired. I didn't even see what he was doing, what I was doing."

In other matches, sixth-seeded Richard Krajicek

reached the third round with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over South African David Nainkin and seventh-seeded Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden defeated Australian Scott Draper 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 in the other second-round match.

Also, No. 9 seed Alberto Costa of Spain defeated Australia's Jason Stoltenberg 7-5, 6-4; No. 15 Fabrice Santoro of France downed Martin Damm of the Czech Republic 6-1, 6-4; and 17th-seeded Nicolas Kiefer of Germany beat Canada's Daniel Nestor 6-2, 7-6 (7-1).

No. 16 Wayne Ferreira of South Africa retired five games into his match with Australia's Michael Tebbutt because of a groin injury.

Ukraine's Andrei Medvedev withdrew with the flu before his match with France's Guillaume Raoux. He was replaced by Finnish qualifier Tuomas Ketola, who lost 7-5, 6-3.



Gustavo Kuerten

Hodde gives fresh snub for Gascoigne

LONDON (AFP) — Middlesbrough midfielder Paul Gascoigne was given a fresh snub by England coach Glenn Hoddle on Tuesday when he was left out of a 29-man squad.

Liverpool and Arsenal players are unavailable due to club duties for the get-together from August 16-18, which is designed as an early preparation for the first European Championships qualifying game against Sweden next month.

But even though Hoddle is therefore without Tony Adams, David Seaman, Ray Parlour, Martin Keown, Michael Owen, Steve McNamara, Jamie Redknapp, Paul Ince and Dominic Matteo, there is still no place for Gascoigne.

The wounds of his public falling-out with the England coach in the build-up to the World Cup, when he was excluded from the final squad

of 22, have clearly not yet healed.

And, at the age of 31, there seems little time left for a reconciliation, unless the midfielder can start to rediscover his lost form and fitness with Middlesbrough this season.

Hoddle said: "The Gazza situation still goes on. The door is not shut for him."

"He needs to be fitter than ever before, and I will be looking very closely as to how he starts the season. There are a few players in the same situation — Matthew Le Tissier, for instance."

The England coach added: "It's a good time for us to touch base with everyone after the World Cup. There are some youngsters from the England Under-21s for us to have a close look at."

"This also gives players like Philip Neville and Ian Walker the chance to get back on

board. We will obviously be looking towards the Sweden game as well."

Hoddle has turned firmly to youth as he aims to build a squad capable of building for the future on the back of the hopes raised by the World Cup.

Seven young uncapped players catch the eye as the first signs of Hoddle's post-World Cup intention become clear.

Leicester striker Emile Heskey, Coventry forward Darren Huckerby, Norwich winger Darren Eadie, Ipswich duo Richard Wright and Kieron Dyer, Newcastle signing Carl Serrant and Sheffield United's Wayne Quinn all get their chance to impress.

England squad: Tim Flowers (Blackburn), Nigel Martyn (Leeds), Ian Walker (Tottenham), Richard Wright (Ipswich), Scott Campbell (Tottenham), Wayne Quinn (Sheffield United), Carl Serrant

(Newcastle), Kieron Dyer (Ipswich), Darren Huckerby (Coventry), Ray Ferdinand (West Ham), Gareth Southgate (Aston Villa), Gary Neville (Manchester United), Phil Neville (Manchester United), Darren Anderson (Tottenham), David Beckham (Manchester United), Graeme Le Saux (Chelsea), Andy Hinchcliffe (Sheffield Wednesday), Nicky Butt (Manchester United), Rob Lee (Newcastle), Darren Eadie (Norwich), Emile Heskey (Leicester), Paul Merson (Middlesbrough), Paul Scholes (Manchester United), Les Ferdinand (Tottenham), Alan Shearer (Newcastle), Teddy Sheringham (Manchester United), Dion Dublin (Coventry), Ian Wright (West Ham), Andy Cole (Manchester United).

MLB RESULTS

National League				American League			
Houston	9	Florida	5	NY Yankees	10	Oakland	4 (1st Gm)
Montreal	5	Los Angeles	4 (10 Innings)	NY Yankees	10	Oakland	5 (2nd Gm)
Pittsburgh	13	Colorado	5	Chi White Sox	8	Tampa Bay	6
Atlanta	4	Cincinnati	2	Baltimore	4	Detroit	0
NY Mets	7	San Francisco	6 (10 Innings)	Kansas City	12	Minnesota	4
Chicago Cubs	2	Arizona	0	Texas	11	Toronto	9
St. Louis	2	Milwaukee	1	Anaheim	5	Cleveland	4
San Diego	3	Philadelphia	1	Boston	2	Seattle	1

PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hisham Yanes Theatre
Leonardo DiCaprio...in THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	Comedian Adel Inam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	Comedian Adel Inam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD... Adel Inam & Yusra...in A LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 CONCORD... DRACULA Shows: 3:30 only	ABDOUN www.cus.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Adel Inam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	ABDOUN www.cus.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Adel Inam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	STARTING JULY 13TH The Authority in the Service of the People Starring Hisham Yanes and the group For reservations call: 4640155, 4625155



Graf rolls past

MILWAUKEE (AFP) — Just a week after Julie Halard-Genoulon's victory in the WTA Tour, Graf rolled past her in the second round of the WTA Tour, retaining her record in the event.

Graf played the event on previous occasions, winning the title every time she entered. Conchita Martinez of Spain also won the event in 1997.

Conchita Martinez, who won the event in 1997, was defeated by Graf in the first round of the tournament.

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Steffi Graf

Graf rolls past Halard-Decugis

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — Steffi Graf swept aside Julie Halard-Decugis of France 6-2, 6-2 to reach the second round of the WTA Tour event here Tuesday, retaining her undefeated record in San Diego.

Graf has played the event on four previous occasions, winning the title every time. Fifth seeded Conchita Martinez of Spain also advanced, beating American Kimberly Po 6-4, 6-2, and there was victory for number eight seed Nathalie Tauziat of France, who outlasted Taiwan's Shuang Wang 7-5, 3-6, 6-1. But seventh seed Irina Spirlea of Romania was upset, falling 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 to South Africa's Joanneke Kruger.

Graf dominated Halard-Decugis with her lethal forehand, often overpowering her slightly built opponent. Although Halard-Decugis often made some returns under pressure in the hard-hitting rallies, it was the German who dictated play and usually forced the error.

Graf's first break earned her a 3-1 lead, and she broke again for the set. In the second set, Graf swiftly built a 4-0 lead, but then dropped her serve for the only time in the match. The French woman's reprieve was only temporary though as Graf claimed eight of the

final nine points to wrap up victory in 57 minutes.

"We had some good rallies and some good points," said Graf. "I'm getting better and better. I'm feeling pretty solid right now and getting used to playing matches again. I'm cutting really down on my mistakes."

"But there are a few things I have to work on, like when I started having cramps in the third set last week because I haven't really been used to playing very long. That's one of the things I need to be working on in the next two or three weeks."

Kruger had lost four times to Spirlea, conceding their last two meetings meekly. It was, she decided, time for a change.

"I told myself that the only way I would win this match was to go for it, because if you give her any time on her shots she can just blow you off the court," said Kruger.

"The biggest thing was for me to say I was going to be aggressive on every single shot from beginning to end, and it worked out. Today was very key for me, because I proved I can win the match by going after it."

Tauziat returned to court for the first time since contesting the Wimbledon final, and blamed her lay-off for struggling to beat a

qualifier.

"It's never easy when you play a qualifier because they've had matches already, and I didn't play since Wimbledon so it was tough," said Tauziat. "I need to play matches, and now I'm nine in the world and it's a different level for me. Everybody wants to beat you because they have nothing to lose."

While the focus has recently been on the exciting young players, Tauziat has quietly achieved the most successful period of her career at 30. It is something she is immensely proud of.

"My goal always was to be in the top 10," she said, "and when I said that two or three years ago people laughed and said I was too old. Now I'm 30 and I'm there. I worked very hard for that and I'm very pleased. Now I want to reach the top 5. And maybe win Wimbledon next year. I think I have a good chance."

Chanda Rubin claimed her most decisive victory in more than three years when she dropped only one game to Yayuk Basuki, winning 6-0, 6-1 in just 50 minutes.

Argentina ace heading for Arsenal

LONDON (AFP) — Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger hopes to make Argentina defender Nelson Vivas his first major signing of the summer. Wenger wants the defender's £2 million (\$3.2 million) transfer from Swiss side Lugano to be completed in time for Sunday's Charity Shield clash with Manchester United at Wembley.

"We are very hopeful and close to completing the deal for Vivas," said the Arsenal boss. "It should go through at any stage and of course we would like him to play in the Charity Shield."

Vice-chairman David Dein was alongside Wenger when he made the announcement. His only other buy this season has been French full-back David Grondin.

But the Highbury boss scotched rumours that he has made inquiries about Dutch star Clarence Seedorf. He said: "I like Clarence. He is a quality player but we are not looking to strengthen that area at the moment."

"We have enough younger players coming through to cope with the loss of David Platt and I am more concerned about other positions."

Wihdat, Faisali meet Friday in Jordan Cup final

Premier League resumes Aug. 9

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Jordan Cup record (runner up in brackets)

AMMAN — Al Wihdat will be looking for their third consecutive Jordan Cup title when they meet rivals Al Faisali Friday in the final match of the second of the season's four major soccer championships.

Al Wihdat reached the final after a 2-0 win over Al Jazireh, while Al Faisali scored an overwhelming 5-0 win over surprise qualifiers Al Turra who had earlier knocked out Al Ramtha and currently lead the first division championship.

Al Faisali are the Jordan Cup recordholders with 9 titles. Other quarterfinalists this year included Al Karmel, Al Qadissieh, Al Mugheer and Al Hussein.

The Jordan Cup grouped 40 teams representing the Premier League as well as the first and second divisions, and was held on a knockout basis with most of the Premier League teams having first round byes.

The fourth major event of the season will be the Federation Shield, grouping the Premier League only and also played on a knockout basis.

Premier League resumes Sunday

The Kingdom's most prestigious soccer event — the Premier League — resumes Sunday after a two-month break to allow the national team to compete in the Arab Cup.

Jordan drew 1-1 with Palestine, lost to Syria 3-0 and beat hosts Lebanon 2-0 to qualify to the finals

1980 — Faisali (Baqaa)
1981 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1982 — Wihdat (Ahli)
1983 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1984 — Jazireh (Ahli)
1985 — Wihdat (Faisali)
1986 — Arabi (Jazireh)
1987 — Faisali (Hussein)
1988 — Wihdat (Faisali)
1989 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1990 — Ramtha (Hussein)
1991 — Ramtha (Wihdat)
1992 — Faisali (Wihdat)
1993 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1994 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1995 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1996 — Wihdat (Ramtha)
1997 — Wihdat (Ramtha)

of the event which will be held in Qatar Sept. 22-30.

With action back to local competitions, the fifth week's Aug. 10 clash will group Al Wihdat and Al Faisali who lead the ten-team event.

Al Wihdat top the standings on goal difference as both teams maintained unbeaten records so far.

The much-awaited match will undoubtedly be a crucial turning point in the standings of the first leg of the event which concludes Aug. 26.

The Premier League competition kicked off in April but has witnessed a series of delays mainly caused by the month-long boycott of seven teams over the issue of ticket sales allocation before the Jordan Football Association settled the dispute.

Al Wihdat are this year looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title, having also won the Jordan Cup and Cup Winners Cup in the past two years.

This year they won the first of the season's titles when they won the season-opening Cup Winners' Cup after a 4-2 win over Al Ramtha.

It was Al Wihdat's fourth Cup Winners' Cup trophy after winning in 1989, 1992 and 1997.

PREMIER LEAGUE STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Wihdat	4	4	-	-	13	2	12
Faisali	4	4	-	-	10	1	12
Ramtha	4	1	2	1	5	6	5
Jazireh	4	1	2	1	2	4	5
Ahli	4	-	3	1	2	3	3
S. Al Hussein	4	-	3	1	5	7	3
Qadissieh	4	-	3	1	3	6	3
Kufrioum	4	-	3	1	3	6	3
Hussein	4	1	-	3	2	6	3
Arabi	4	-	2	2	2	6	2

By the Associated Press

STARS

Lindsay Davenport beat fellow American Venus Williams, 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 to win the Bank of the West Classic.

Andre Agassi of the United States won the Mercedes-Benz Cup title over Tim Henman of Britain 6-4, 6-4.

Czech Bohdan Ulihrach defeated Sweden's Magnus Norman 6-3, 7-6 (7-0) for the Croatia Open title.

Spain's Albert Costa took five sets to defeat Italy's Andrea Gaudenzi for the championship of the Generali Open.

Henrieta Nagyova of Slovakia was a 6-3, 5-7, 6-1 winner over Elena Wagner of Germany in the Polish Open championship.

SPEAKING

"It's like letting something ride on the blackjack table. If you let it ride, it gets bigger quicker." — Las Vegas native Andre Agassi,

on his 11-match winning streak.

"It's a little frustrating. I know she's done it a lot of times before in the past and I was thinking, 'OK, maybe she's injured. Don't lose concentration.'" — Lindsay Davenport on Venus Williams' injury timeouts during the final of the Bank of the West Classic.

"I'm in the best shape that I have been in a while. It's been frustrating, though, because every time I get in shape and things are going well, something happens to set me back like an injury. I'm working out now to make sure I don't get injured."

American Jennifer Capriati, after qualifying for the Bank of the West Classic. She lost to Romania's Corina Morariu in the first round 6-4, 3-6, 6-4.

"I don't look at myself as the best ever or my place in history. It's up to the tennis experts to figure that out. I'm just trying to be the best player I can be." — American Pete Sampras, on his place in tennis history.

"I'm not shocked, I'm excited. I've been working hard and preparing myself to win that kind of match. It's proof I'm ready to take the next step." — American Justin Gimelstob, after beating Australia's Patrick Rafter in the quarterfinals of the Mercedes-Benz Cup.

SERVICE BREAKS

The field for the Great American Insurance ATP Championship Cincinnati, the sixth Mercedes Super 9 tournament of the season, features 19 of the top 20 ranked players, with only Slovakia's Karol Kucera not entered. The tournament begins Monday with Pete Sampras as the defending champion ... Albert Costa's victory at the Generali Open was his eighth career title

and second this year. All have been on clay ... Andre Agassi's victory over Tim Henman at the Mercedes-Benz Cup was his 11th straight, all without dropping a set. The title was his fourth of the year ... The Lindsay Davenport-Venus Williams match at the Bank of the West Classic had a 10-minute timeout before the final set. The WTA Tour has a heat-stress index that allows for such breaks when the temperature on court is at least 32 degrees Celsius (90 Fahrenheit) at the start of a match. The match was the first WTA Tour final since the 1997 Acura Classic in which two Americans played ... Jennifer Capriati had to qualify to earn a berth in the Bank of the West Classic. In her final qualifying match, Capriati beat Argentina's


Mercedes Paz, who was playing the final singles match of her 15-year career. She will continue playing doubles.

SITES TO SURF

Toronto: www.tenniscanada.com/dunaurier/english/index.html
Amsterdam: www.match4.nl/groisch.open

TOURNAMENTS THIS WEEK

ATP Tour
\$2.2 million du Maurier Open, hard, Toronto
\$475,000 Groisch Open, clay, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Corel WTA Tour
\$450,000 Toshiba Tennis Classic, hard, San Diego
\$107,500 Enka Ladies Open, hard, Istanbul, Turkey.



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JORDAN TIMES

FAX:
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

The Water Improvement and Conservation Project (WQICP), Ministry of Water and Irrigation, invites qualified Jordanian Consulting firms to submit proposals for Human Resources Development activities.

Offerors are invited to obtain a copy of RFP documents on Saturday, August 8, and Sunday, August 9, 1998 from the WQIC Project Assistant, room 215, 2nd floor Ministry of Water and Irrigation Building in Shmeisani.

Closing date for offers is 12:00 o'clock noon on Sunday August 29, 1998.

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- 2- Your Explanation, in no more than 250 words, of why you feel you are suitable for chosen position.

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UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, requires:

Accounting Control Officer, Grade 17 (AVN/17/98)

Reporting directly to Chief, Accounts Division, the incumbent controls all Agency manual and computerised financial accounts and prepares relevant financial statements. Applicants should have 1) University degree in Business Administration or related field including course work in accountancy. 2) Ten years experience in a finance or accounting office of a governmental, international or large commercial organisation within a computerised environment including at least four years' of supervisory experience. 3) Knowledge of computerised finance systems. 4) Fluency in spoken and written English. Qualified candidates may be invited for tests and interviews.

The post is graded at level 17 and carries a monthly Base Salary starting from \$1,143.90, plus Managerial Allowance amounting to 15% of Base Salary. For applicants selected from outside Gaza, a Special Expatriate Allowance will be payable.

Applications quoting AVN number may be mail or fax before 30 August 1998 to: Recruitment Officer, UNRWA HQ Gaza, P.O. Box 371, Gaza City, Fax No. + 972/76777555, or Personnel Officer, Headquarters Amman, Blader Wadi Seer, Fax No. 5826171 or by hand.



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